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CHRONICLES OF CANADA

Edited by George M. Wrong and H. H. Langton

In thirty-two volumes

11

THE WINNING OF CANADA

BY WILLIAM WOOD

Part III

The English Invasion

JAMES WOLFE

From the National Portrait Gallery

THE WINNING OF CANADA

A Chronicle of Wolfe

BY

WILLIAM WOOD

TORONTO
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1920

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TO

MY MOTHER

AUTHOR'S NOTE

ANY life of Wolfe can be artificially simplified by treating his purely military work as something complete in itself and not as a part of a greater whole. But, since such treatment gives a totally false idea of his achievement, this little sketch, drawn straight from original sources, tries to show him as he really was, a co-worker with the British fleet in a war based entirely on naval strategy and inseparably connected with international affairs of world-wide significance. The only simplification attempted here is that of arrangement and expression.

W. W.

Quebec, April 1914.

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CHAPTER I

THE BOY

1727-1741

WOLFE was a soldier born. Many of his ancestors had stood ready to fight for king and country at a moment's notice. His father fought under the great Duke of Marlborough in the war against France at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His grandfather, his great-grandfather, his only uncle, and his only brother were soldiers too. Nor has the martial spirit deserted the descendants of the Wolfes in the generation now alive. They are soldiers still. The present head of the family, who represented it at the celebration of the tercentenary of the founding of Quebec, fought in Egypt for Queen Victoria; and the member of it who represented Wolfe on that occasion, in the pageant of the Quebec campaign, is an officer in the Canadian army under George V.

The Wolfes are of an old and honourable

line. Many hundreds of years ago their forefathers lived in England and later on in Wales. Later still, in the fifteenth century, before America was discovered, they were living in Ireland. Wolfe's father, however, was born in England; and, as there is no evidence that any of his ancestors in Ireland had married other than English Protestants, and as Wolfe's mother was also English, we may say that the victor of Quebec was a pure-bred Englishman. Among his Anglo-Irish kinsmen were the Goldsmiths and the Seymours. Oliver Goldsmith himself was always very proud of being a cousin of the man who took Quebec.

Wolfe's mother, to whom he owed a great deal of his genius, was a descendant of two good families in Yorkshire. She was eighteen years younger than his father, and was very tall and handsome. Wolfe thought there was no one like her. When he was a colonel, and had been through the wars and at court, he still believed she was 'a match for all the beauties.' He was not lucky enough to take after her in looks, except in her one weak feature, a cutaway chin. His body, indeed, seems to have been made up of the bad points of both parents: he had his rheumatism from his father. But

his spirit was made up of all their good points; and no braver ever lived in any healthy body than in his own sickly, lanky six foot three.

Wolfe's parents went to live at Westerham in Kent shortly after they were married; and there, on January 2, 1727, in the vicarage—where Mrs Wolfe was staying while her husband was away on duty with his regiment—the victor of Quebec was born. Two other houses in the little country town of Westerham are full of memories of Wolfe. One of these was his father's, a house more than two hundred years old when he was born. It was built in the reign of Henry VII, and the loyal subject who built it had the king's coat of arms carved over the big stone fireplace. Here Wolfe and his younger brother Edward used to sit in the winter evenings with their mother, while their veteran father told them the story of his long campaigns. So, curiously enough, it appears that Wolfe, the soldier who won Canada for England in 1759, sat under the arms of the king in whose service the sailor Cabot hoisted the flag of England over Canadian soil in 1497. This house has been called Quebec House ever since the victory in 1759. The other house is Squerryes Court, belonging

then and now to the Warde family, the Wolfes' closest friends. Wolfe and George Warde were chums from the first day they met. Both wished to go into the Army; and both, of course, 'played soldiers,' like other virile boys. Warde lived to be an old man and actually did become a famous cavalry leader. Perhaps when he charged a real enemy, sword in hand, at the head of thundering squadrons, it may have flashed through his mind how he and Wolfe had waved their whips and cheered like mad when they galloped their ponies down the common with nothing but their barking dogs behind them.

Wolfe's parents presently moved to Greenwich, where he was sent to school at Swinden's. Here he worked quietly enough till just before he entered on his 'teens. Then the long-pent rage of England suddenly burst in war with Spain. The people went wild when the British fleet took Porto Bello, a Spanish port in Central America. The news was cried through the streets all night. The noise of battle seemed to be sounding all round Swinden's school, where most of the boys belonged to naval and military families. Ships were fitting out in English harbours. Soldiers were marching into every

English camp. Crowds were singing and cheering. First one boy's father and then another's was under orders for the front. Among them was Wolfe's father, who was made adjutant-general to the forces assembling in the Isle of Wight. What were history and geography and mathematics now, when a whole nation was afoot to fight! And who would not fight the Spaniards when they cut off British sailors' ears? That was an old tale by this time; but the flames of anger threw it into lurid relief once more.

Wolfe was determined to go and fight. Nothing could stop him. There was no commission for him as an officer. Never mind! He would go as a volunteer and win his commission in the field. So, one hot day in July 1740, the lanky, red-haired boy of thirteen-and-a-half took his seat on the Portsmouth coach beside his father, the veteran soldier of fifty-five. His mother was a woman of much too fine a spirit to grudge anything for the service of her country; but she could not help being exceptionally anxious about the dangers of disease for a sickly boy in a far-off land of pestilence and fever. She had written to him the very day he left. But he, full of the stir and excitement of a big camp, had carried the

letter in his pocket for two or three days before answering it. Then he wrote her the first of many letters from different seats of war, the last one of all being written just before he won the victory that made him famous round the world.

Newport, Isle of Wight,
August 6th, 1740.

I received my dearest Mamma's letter on Monday last, but could not answer it then, by reason I was at camp to see the regiments off to go on board, and was too late for the post; but am very sorry, dear Mamma, that you doubt my love, which I 'm sure is as sincere as ever any son's was to his mother.

Papa and I are just going on board, but I believe shall not sail this fortnight; in which time, if I can get ashore at Portsmouth or any other town, I will certainly write to you, and, when we are gone, by every ship we meet, because I know it is my duty. Besides, if it is not, I would do it out of love, with pleasure.

I am sorry to hear that your head is so bad, which I fear is caused by your being so melancholy; but pray, dear Mamma, if

you love me, don't give yourself up to fears for us. I hope, if it please God, we shall soon see one another, which will be the happiest day that ever I shall see. I will, as sure as I live, if it is possible for me, let you know everything that has happened, by every ship; therefore pray, dearest Mamma, don't doubt about it. I am in a very good state of health, and am likely to continue so. Pray my love to my brother. Pray my service to Mr Streton and his family, to Mr and Mrs Weston, and to George Warde when you see him; and pray believe me to be, my dearest Mamma, your most dutiful, loving and affectionate son, J. Wolfe.

To Mrs. Wolfe, at her house in Greenwich, Kent.

Wolfe's 'very good state of health' was not 'likely to continue so,' either in camp or on board ship. A long peace had made the country indifferent to the welfare of the Army and Navy. Now men were suddenly being massed together in camps and fleets as if on purpose to breed disease. Sanitation on a large scale, never having been practised in peace, could not be improvised in this hurried, though disastrously slow, preparation for a

war. The ship in which Wolfe was to sail had been lying idle for years; and her pestilential bilge-water soon began to make the sailors and soldiers sicken and die. Most fortunately, Wolfe was among the first to take ill; and so he was sent home in time to save him from the fevers of Spanish America.

Wolfe was happy to see his mother again, to have his pony to ride and his dogs to play with. But, though he tried his best to stick to his lessons, his heart was wild for the war. He and George Warde used to go every day during the Christmas holidays behind the pigeon-house at Squerryes Court and practise with their swords and pistols. One day they stopped when they heard the post-horn blowing at the gate; and both of them became very much excited when George's father came out himself with a big official envelope marked 'On His Majesty's Service' and addressed to 'James Wolfe, Esquire.' Inside was a commission as second lieutenant in the Marines, signed by George II and dated at St James's Palace, November 3, 1741. Eighteen years later, when the fame of the conquest of Canada was the talk of the kingdom, the Wardes had a stone monument built to mark the spot where Wolfe was standing when the squire handed him his first com-

mission. And there it is to-day; and on it are the verses ending,

> This spot so sacred will forever claim
> A proud alliance with its hero's name.

Wolfe was at last an officer. But the Marines were not the corps for him. Their service companies were five thousand miles away, while war with France was breaking out much nearer home. So what was his delight at receiving another commission, on March 25, 1742, as an ensign in the 12th Regiment of Foot! He was now fifteen, an officer, a soldier born and bred, eager to serve his country, and just appointed to a regiment ordered to the front! Within a month an army such as no one had seen since the days of Marlborough had been assembled at Blackheath. Infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers, they were all there when King George II, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Cumberland came down to review them. Little did anybody think that the tall, eager ensign carrying the colours of the 12th past His Majesty was the man who was to play the foremost part in winning Canada for the British crown.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUNG SOLDIER

1741-1748

WOLFE'S short life may be divided into four periods, all easy to remember, because all are connected with the same number—seven. He was fourteen years a boy at home, with one attempt to be a soldier. This period lasted from 1727 to 1741. Then he was seven years a young officer in time of war, from 1741 to 1748. Then he served seven years more in time of peace, from 1748 to 1755. Lastly, he died in the middle, at the very climax, of the world-famous Seven Years' War, in 1759.

After the royal review at Blackheath in the spring of 1742 the army marched down to Deptford and embarked for Flanders. Wolfe was now off to the very places he had heard his father tell about again and again. The surly Flemings were still the same as when his father knew them. They hated their

British allies almost as much as they hated their enemies. The long column of redcoats marched through a scowling mob of citizens, who meanly grudged a night's lodging to the very men coming there to fight for them. We may be sure that Wolfe thought little enough of such mean people as he stepped out with the colours flying above his head. The army halted at Ghent, an ancient city, famous for its trade and wealth, and defended by walls which had once resisted Marlborough.

At first there was a good deal to do and see; and George Warde was there too, as an officer in a cavalry regiment. But Warde had to march away; and Wolfe was left without any companion of his own age, to pass his spare time the best way he could. Like another famous soldier, Frederick the Great, who first won his fame in this very war, he was fond of music and took lessons on the flute. He also did his best to improve his French; and when Warde came back the two friends used to go to the French theatre. Wolfe put his French to other use as well, and read all the military books he could find time for. He always kept his kit ready to pack; so that he could have marched anywhere within two hours of receiving the order. And, though only a mere

boy-officer, he began to learn the duties of an adjutant, so that he might be fit for promotion whenever the chance should come.

Months wore on and Wolfe was still at Ghent. He had made friends during his stay, and he tells his mother in September: 'This place is full of officers, and we never want company. I go to the play once or twice a week, and talk a little with the ladies, who are very civil and speak French.' Before Christmas it had been decided at home—where the war-worn father now was, after a horrible campaign at Cartagena—that Edward, the younger son, was also to be allowed to join the Army. Wolfe was delighted. 'My brother is much to be commended for the pains he takes to improve himself. I hope to see him soon in Flanders, when, in all probability, before next year is over, we may know something of our trade.' And so they did!

The two brothers marched for the Rhine early in 1743, both in the same regiment. James was now sixteen, Edward fifteen. The march was a terrible one for such delicate boys. The roads were ankle-deep in mud; the weather was vile; both food and water were very bad. Even the dauntless Wolfe had to confess to his mother that he was 'very

much fatigued and out of order. I never come into quarters without aching hips and knees.' Edward, still more delicate, was sent off on a foraging party to find something for the regiment to eat. He wrote home to his father from Bonn on April 7: 'We can get nothing upon our march but eggs and bacon and sour bread. I have no bedding, nor can get it anywhere. We had a sad march last Monday in the morning. I was obliged to walk up to my knees in snow, though my brother and I have a horse between us. I have often lain upon straw, and should oftener, had I not known some French, which I find very useful; though I was obliged the other day to speak *Latin* for a good dinner. We send for everything we want to the priest.'

That summer, when the king arrived with his son the Duke of Cumberland, the British and Hanoverian army was reduced to 37,000 half-fed men. Worse still, the old general, Lord Stair, had led it into a very bad place. These 37,000 men were cooped up on the narrow side of the valley of the river Main, while a much larger French army was on the better side, holding bridges by which to cut them off and attack them while they were all clumped together. Stair tried to slip away in the night.

But the French, hearing of this attempt, sent 12,000 men across the river to hold the place the British general was leaving, and 30,000 more, under the Duc de Gramont, to block the road at the place towards which he was evidently marching. At daylight the British and Hanoverians found themselves cut off, both front and rear, while a third French force was waiting to pounce on whichever end showed weakness first. The King of England, who was also Elector of Hanover, would be a great prize, and the French were eager to capture him. This was how the armies faced each other on the morning of June 27, 1743, at Dettingen, the last battle-field on which any king of England has fought in person, and the first for Wolfe.

The two young brothers were now about to see a big battle, like those of which their father used to tell them. Strangely enough, Amherst, the future commander-in-chief in America, under whom Wolfe served at Louisbourg, and the two men who succeeded Wolfe in command at Quebec—Monckton and Townshend—were also there. It is an awful moment for a young soldier, the one before his first great fight. And here were nearly a hundred thousand men, all in full view of each

other, and all waiting for the word to begin. It was a beautiful day, and the sun shone down on a splendidly martial sight. There stood the British and Hanoverians, with wooded hills on their right, the river and the French on their left, the French in their rear, and the French very strongly posted on the rising ground straight in their front. The redcoats were in dense columns, their bayonets flashing and their colours waving defiance. Side by side with their own red cavalry were the black German cuirassiers, the blue German lancers, and the gaily dressed green and scarlet Hungarian hussars. The long white lines of the three French armies, varied with royal blue, encircled them on three sides. On the fourth were the leafy green hills.

Wolfe was acting as adjutant and helping the major. His regiment had neither colonel nor lieutenant-colonel with it that day; so he had plenty to do, riding up and down to see that all ranks understood the order that they were not to fire till they were close to the French and were given the word for a volley. He cast a glance at his brother, standing straight and proudly with the regimental colours that he himself had carried past the king at Blackheath the year before. He was

not anxious about 'Ned'; he knew how all the Wolfes could fight. He was not anxious about himself; he was only too eager for the fray. A first battle tries every man, and few have not dry lips, tense nerves, and beating hearts at its approach. But the great anxiety of an officer going into action for the first time with untried men is for them and not for himself. The agony of wondering whether they will do well or not is worse, a thousand times, than what he fears for his own safety.

Presently the French gunners, in the centre of their position across the Main, lit their matches and, at a given signal, fired a salvo into the British rear. Most of the baggage wagons were there; and, as the shot and shell began to knock them over, the drivers were seized with a panic. Cutting the traces, these men galloped off up the hills and into the woods as hard as they could go. Now battery after battery began to thunder, and the fire grew hot all round. The king had been in the rear, as he did not wish to change the command on the eve of the battle. But, seeing the panic, he galloped through the whole of his army to show that he was going to fight beside his men. As he passed, and the men saw what he intended to do, they cheered and cheered, and

took heart so boldly that it was hard work to keep them from rushing up the heights of Dettingen, where Gramont's 30,000 Frenchmen were waiting to shoot them down.

Across the river Marshal Noailles, the French commander-in-chief, saw the sudden stir in the British ranks, heard the roaring hurrahs, and supposed that his enemies were going to be fairly caught against Gramont in front. In this event he could finish their defeat himself by an overwhelming attack in flank. Both his own and Gramont's artillery now redoubled their fire, till the British could hardly stand it. But then, to the rage and despair of Noailles, Gramont's men, thinking the day was theirs, suddenly left their strong position and charged down on to the same level as the British, who were only too pleased to meet them there. The king, seeing what a happy turn things were taking, galloped along the front of his army, waving his sword and calling out, 'Now, boys! Now for the honour of England!' His horse, maddened by the din, plunged and reared, and would have run away with him, straight in among the French, if a young officer called Trapaud had not seized the reins. The king then dismounted and put himself at the head of his troops,

where he remained fighting, sword in hand, till the battle was over.

Wolfe and his major rode along the line of their regiment for the last time. There was not a minute to lose. Down came the Royal Musketeers of France, full gallop, smash through the Scots Fusiliers and into the line in rear, where most of them were unhorsed and killed. Next, both sides advanced their cavalry, but without advantage to either. Then, with a clear front once more, the main bodies of the French and British infantry rushed together for a fight to a finish. Nearly all of Wolfe's regiment were new to war and too excited to hold their fire. When they were within range, and had halted for a moment to steady the ranks, they brought their muskets down to the 'present.' The French fell flat on their faces and the bullets whistled harmlessly over them. Then they sprang to their feet and poured in a steady volley while the British were reloading. But the second British volley went home. When the two enemies closed on each other with the bayonet, like the meeting of two stormy seas, the British fought with such fury that the French ranks were broken. Soon the long white waves rolled back and the long red waves

rolled forward. Dettingen was reached and the desperate fight was won.

Both the boy-officers wrote home, Edward to his mother, James to his father. Here is a part of Edward's letter :

> My brother and self escaped in the engagement and, thank God, are as well as ever we were in our lives, after not only being cannonaded two hours and three-quarters, and fighting with small arms [muskets and bayonets] two hours and one-quarter, but lay the two following nights upon our arms ; whilst it rained for about twenty hours in the same time, yet are ready and as capable to do the same again. The Duke of Cumberland behaved charmingly. Our regiment has got a great deal of honour, for we were in the middle of the first line, and in the greatest danger. My brother has wrote to my father and I believe has given him a small account of the battle, so I hope you will excuse it me.

A manly and soldier-like letter for a boy of fifteen ! Wolfe's own is much longer and full of touches that show how cool and observant

he was, even in his first battle and at the age of only sixteen. Here is some of it:

> The Gens d'Armes, or Mousquetaires Gris, attacked the first line, composed of nine regiments of English foot, and four or five of Austrians, and some Hanoverians. But before they got to the second line, out of two hundred there were not forty living. These unhappy men were of the first families in France. Nothing, I believe, could be more rash than their undertaking. The third and last attack was made by the foot on both sides. We advanced towards one another; our men in high spirits, and very impatient for fighting, being elated with beating the French Horse, part of which advanced towards us; while the rest attacked our Horse, but were soon driven back by the great fire we gave them. The major and I (for we had neither colonel nor lieutenant-colonel), before they came near, were employed in begging and ordering the men not to fire at too great a distance, but to keep it till the enemy should come near us; but to little purpose. The whole fired when they thought they could reach them, which had like to have ruined

us. However, we soon rallied again, and attacked them with great fury, which gained us a complete victory, and forced the enemy to retire in great haste. We got the sad news of the death of as good and brave a man as any amongst us, General Clayton. His death gave us all sorrow, so great was the opinion we had of him. He had, 'tis said, orders for pursuing the enemy, and if we had followed them, they would not have repassed the Main with half their number. Their loss is computed to be between six and seven thousand men, and ours three thousand. His Majesty was in the midst of the fight; and the duke behaved as bravely as a man could do. I had several times the honour of speaking with him just as the battle began and was often afraid of his being dashed to pieces by the cannon-balls. He gave his orders with a great deal of calmness and seemed quite unconcerned. The soldiers were in high delight to have him so near them. I sometimes thought I had lost poor Ned when I saw arms, legs, and heads beat off close by him. A horse I rid of the colonel's, at the first attack, was shot in one of his hinder legs and threw me; so I was obliged to do

the duty of an adjutant all that and the next day on foot, in a pair of heavy boots. Three days after the battle I got the horse again, and he is almost well.

Shortly after Dettingen Wolfe was appointed adjutant and promoted to a lieutenancy. In the next year he was made a captain in the 4th Foot while his brother became a lieutenant in the 12th. After this they had very few chances of meeting; and Edward, who had caught a deadly chill, died alone in Flanders, not yet seventeen years old. Wolfe wrote home to his mother:

Poor Ned wanted nothing but the satisfaction of seeing his dearest friends to leave the world with the greatest tranquillity. It gives me many uneasy hours when I reflect on the possibility there was of my being with him before he died. God knows it was not apprehending the danger the poor fellow was in; and even that would not have hindered it had I received the physician's first letter. I know you won't be able to read this without shedding tears, as I do writing it. Though it is the custom of the army to sell the deceased's effects, I could not suffer it. We none of us want,

and I thought the best way would be to bestow them on the deserving whom he had an esteem for in his lifetime. To his servant—the most honest and faithful man I ever knew—I gave all his clothes. I gave his horse to his friend Parry. I know he loved Parry, and for that reason the horse will be taken care of. His other horse I keep myself. I have his watch, sash, gorget, books, and maps, which I shall preserve to his memory. He was an honest and good lad, had lived very well, and always discharged his duty with the cheerfulness becoming a good officer. He lived and died as a son of you two should. There was no part of his life that makes him dearer to me than what you so often mentioned—*he pined after me.*

It was this pining to follow Wolfe to the wars that cost poor Ned his life. But did not Wolfe himself pine to follow his father?

The next year, 1745, the Young Pretender, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie,' raised the Highland clans on behalf of his father, won several battles, and invaded England, in the hope of putting the Hanoverian Georges off the throne

of Great Britain and regaining it for the exiled Stuarts. The Duke of Cumberland was sent to crush him; and with the duke went Wolfe. Prince Charlie's army retreated and was at last brought to bay on Culloden Moor, six miles from Inverness. The Highlanders were not in good spirits after their long retreat before the duke's army, which enjoyed an immense advantage in having a fleet following it along the coast with plenty of provisions, while the prince's wretched army was half starved. We may be sure the lesson was not lost on Wolfe. Nobody understood better than he that the fleet is the first thing to consider in every British war. And nobody saw a better example of this than he did afterwards in Canada.

At daybreak on April 16, 1746, the Highlanders found the duke's army marching towards Inverness, and drew up in order to prevent it. Both armies halted, each hoping the other would make the mistake of charging. At last, about one o'clock, the Highlanders in the centre and right could be held back no longer. So eager were they to get at the redcoats that most of them threw down their muskets without even firing them, and then rushed on furiously, sword in hand. 'Twas

for a time,' said Wolfe, 'a dispute between the swords and bayonets, but the latter was found by far the most destructable [*sic*] weapon.' No quarter was given or taken on either side during an hour of desperate fighting hand to hand. By that time the steady ranks of the redcoats, aided by the cavalry, had killed five times as many as they had lost by the wild slashing of the claymores. The Highlanders turned and fled. The Stuart cause was lost for ever.

Again another year of fighting: this time in Holland, where the British, Dutch, and Austrians under the Duke of Cumberland met the French at the village of Laffeldt, on June 21, 1747. Wolfe was now a brigade-major, which gave him the same sort of position in a brigade of three battalions as an adjutant has in a single one; that is, he was a smart junior officer picked out to help the brigadier in command by seeing that orders were obeyed. The fight was furious. As fast as the British infantry drove back one French brigade another came forward and drove the British back. The village was taken and lost, lost and taken, over and over again. Wolfe, though wounded, kept up the fight. At last a new French brigade

charged in and swept the British out altogether. Then the duke ordered the Dutch and Austrians to advance. But the Dutch cavalry, right in the centre, were seized with a sudden panic and galloped back, knocking over their own men on the way, and making a gap that certainly looked fatal. But the right man was ready to fill it. This was Sir John Ligonier, afterwards commander-in-chief of the British Army at the time of Wolfe's campaigns in Canada. He led the few British and Austrian cavalry, among them the famous Scots Greys, straight into the gap and on against the dense masses of the French beyond. These gallant horsemen were doomed; and of course they knew it when they dashed themselves to death against such overwhelming odds. But they gained the few precious moments that were needed. The gap closed up behind them; and the army was saved, though they were lost.

During the day Wolfe was several times in great danger. He was thanked by the duke in person for the splendid way in which he had done his duty. The royal favour, however, did not make him forget the gallant conduct of his faithful servant, Roland: 'He came to me at the hazard of his life with offers of his service, took off my cloak and brought a fresh

horse; and would have continued close by me had I not ordered him to retire. I believe he was slightly wounded just at that time. Many a time has he pitched my tent and made the bed ready to receive me, half-dead with fatigue.' Nor did Wolfe forget his dumb friends: 'I have sold my poor little gray mare. I lamed her by accident, and thought it better to dismiss her the service immediately. I grieved at parting with so faithful a servant, and have the comfort to know she is in good hands, will be very well fed, and taken care of in her latter days.'

After recovering from a slight wound received at Laffeldt Wolfe was allowed to return to England, where he remained for the winter. On the morrow of New Year's Day, 1748, he celebrated his coming of age at his father's town house in Old Burlington Street, London. In the spring, however, he was ordered to rejoin the army, and was stationed with the troops who were guarding the Dutch frontier. The war came to an end in the same year, and Wolfe went home. Though then only twenty-one, he was already an experienced soldier, a rising officer, and a marked man.

CHAPTER III

THE SEVEN YEARS' PEACE

1748-1755

WOLFE was made welcome in England wherever he went. In spite of his youth his name was well known to the chief men in the Army, and he was already a hero among the friends of his family. By nature he was fond of the society of ladies, and of course he fell in love. He had had a few flirtations before, like most other soldiers; but this time the case was serious. The difference was the same as between a sham fight and a battle. His choice fell on Elizabeth Lawson, a maid of honour to the Princess of Wales. The oftener he saw her the more he fell in love with her. But the course of true love did not, as we shall presently see, run any more smoothly for him than it has for many another famous man.

In 1749, when Wolfe was only twenty-two, he was promoted major of the 20th Regiment of Foot. He joined it in Scotland, where he

was to serve for the next few years. At first he was not very happy in Glasgow. He did not like the people, as they were very different from the friends with whom he had grown up. Yet his loneliness only added to his zeal for study. He had left school when still very young, and he now found himself ignorant of much that he wished to know. As a man of the world he had found plenty of gaps in his general knowledge. Writing to his friend Captain Rickson, he says: 'When a man leaves his studies at fifteen, he will never be justly called a man of letters. I am endeavouring to repair the damages of my education, and have a person to teach me Latin and mathematics.' From his experience in his own profession, also, he had learned a good deal. In a letter to his father he points out what excellent chances soldiers have to see the vivid side of many things: 'That variety incident to a military life gives our profession some advantages over those of a more even nature. We have all our passions and affections aroused and exercised, many of which must have wanted their proper employment had not suitable occasions obliged us to exert them. Few men know their own courage till danger proves them, or how far

the love of honour or dread of shame are superior to the love of life. This is a knowledge to be best acquired in an army; our actions are there in presence of the world, to be fully censured or approved.'

Great commanders are always keen to learn everything really worth while. It is only the little men who find it a bore. Of course, there are plenty of little men in a regiment, as there are everywhere else in the world; and some of the officers were afraid Wolfe would insist on their doing as he did. But he never preached. He only set the example, and those who had the sense could follow it. One of his captains wrote home: 'Our acting colonel here is a paragon. He neither drinks, curses, nor gambles. So we make him our pattern.' After a year with him the officers found him a 'jolly good fellow' as well as a pattern; and when he became their lieutenant-colonel at twenty-three they gave him a dinner that showed he was a prime favourite among them. He was certainly quite as popular with the men. Indeed, he soon became known by a name which speaks for itself—'the soldier's friend.'

By and by Wolfe's regiment marched into the Highlands, where he had fought

against Prince Charlie in the '45. But he kept in touch with what was going on in the world outside. He wrote to Rickson at Halifax, to find out for him all he could about the French and British colonies in America. In the same letter, written in 1751, he said he should like to see some Highland soldiers raised for the king's army and sent out there to fight. Eight years later he was to have a Highland regiment among his own army at Quebec. Other themes filled the letters to his mother. Perhaps he was thinking of Miss Lawson when he wrote: 'I have a certain turn of mind that favours matrimony prodigiously. I love children. Two or three manly sons are a present to the world, and the father that offers them sees with satisfaction that he is to live in his successors.' He was thinking more gravely of a still higher thing when he wrote on his twenty-fifth birthday, January 2, 1752, to reassure his mother about the strength of his religion.

Later on in the year, having secured leave of absence, he wrote to his mother in the best of spirits. He asked her to look after all the little things he wished to have done. 'Mr Pattison sends a pointer to Blackheath; if you will order him to be tied up in your stable, it

will oblige me much. If you hear of a servant who can dress a wig it will be a favour done me to engage him. I have another favour to beg of you and you 'll think it an odd one: 'tis to order some currant jelly to be made in a crock for my use. It is the custom in Scotland to eat it in the morning with bread.' Then he proposed to have a shooting-lodge in the Highlands, long before any other Englishman seems to have thought of what is now so common. 'You know what a whimsical sort of person I am. Nothing pleases me now but hunting, shooting, and fishing. I have distant notions of taking a very little house, remote upon the edge of the forest, merely for sport.'

In July he left the Highlands, which were then, in some ways, as wild as Labrador is now. About this time there was a map made by a Frenchman in Paris which gave all the chief places in the Lowlands quite rightly, but left the north of Scotland blank, with the words 'Unknown land here, inhabited by the "Iglandaires"!' When his leave began Wolfe went first to Dublin—'dear, dirty Dublin,' as it used to be called—where his uncle, Major Walter Wolfe, was living. He wrote to his father: 'The streets are crowded with people of a large size and well limbed,

and the women very handsome. They have clearer skins, and fairer complexions than the women in England or Scotland, and are exceeding straight and well made'; which shows that he had the proper soldier's eye for every pretty girl. Then he went to London and visited his parents in their new house at the corner of Greenwich Park, which stands to-day very much the same as it was then. But, wishing to travel, he succeeded, after a great deal of trouble, in getting leave to go to Paris. Lord Bury was a friend of his, and Lord Bury's father, the Earl of Albemarle, was the British ambassador there. So he had a good chance of seeing the best of everything. Perhaps it would be almost as true to say that he had as good a chance of seeing the worst of everything. For there were a great many corrupt and corrupting men and women at the French court. There was also much misery in France, and both the corruption and the misery were soon to trouble New France, as Canada was then called, even more than they troubled Old France at home.

Wolfe wished to travel about freely, to see the French armies at work, and then to go on to Prussia to see how Frederick the Great managed his perfectly disciplined army. This

would have been an excellent thing to do. But it was then a very new thing for an officer to ask leave to study foreign armies. Moreover, the chief men in the British Army did not like the idea of letting such a good colonel go away from his regiment for a year, even though he was going with the object of making himself a still better officer. Perhaps, too, his friends were just a little afraid that he might join the Prussians or the Austrians; for it was not, in those days, a very strange thing to join the army of a friendly foreign country. Whatever the reason, the long leave was refused and he went no farther than Paris.

Louis XV was then at the height of his apparent greatness; and France was a great country, as it is still. But king and government were both corrupt. Wolfe saw this well enough and remembered it when the next war broke out. There was a brilliant society in 'the capital of civilization,' as the people of Paris proudly called their city; and there was a great deal to see. Nor was all of it bad. He wrote home two days after his arrival.

> The packet [ferry] did not sail that night, but we embarked at half-an-hour after six

in the morning and got into Calais at ten. I never suffered so much in so short a time at sea. The people [in Paris] seem to be very sprightly. The buildings are very magnificent, far surpassing any we have in London. Mr Selwin has recommended a French master to me, and in a few days I begin to ride in the Academy, but must dance and fence in my own lodgings. Lord Albemarle [the British ambassador] is come from Fontainebleau. I have very good reason to be pleased with the reception I met with. The best amusement for strangers in Paris is the Opera, and the next is the playhouse. The theatre is a school to acquire the French language, for which reason I frequent it more than the other.

In Paris he met young Philip Stanhope, the boy to whom the Earl of Chesterfield wrote his celebrated letters; 'but,' says Wolfe, 'I fancy he is infinitely inferior to his father.' Keeping fit, as we call it nowadays, seems to have been Wolfe's first object. He took the same care of himself as the Japanese officers did in the Russo-Japanese War; and for the same reason, that he might be the better able

to serve his country well the next time she needed him. Writing to his mother he says:

> I am up every morning at or before seven and fully employed till twelve. Then I dress and visit, and dine at two. At five most people go to the public entertainments, which keep you till nine; and at eleven I am always in bed. This way of living is directly opposite to the practice of the place. But no constitution could go through all. Four or five days in the week I am up six hours before any other fine gentleman in Paris. I ride, fence, dance, and have a master to teach me French. I succeed much better in fencing and riding than in the art of dancing, for they suit my genius better; and I improve a little in French. I have no great acquaintance with the French women, nor am likely to have. It is almost impossible to introduce one's self among them without losing a great deal of money, which you know I can't afford; besides, these entertainments begin at the time I go to bed, and I have not health enough to sit up all night and work all day. The people here use umbrellas to defend them from

the sun, and something of the same kind to secure them from the rain and snow. I wonder a practice so useful is not introduced into England.

While in Paris Wolfe was asked if he would care to be military tutor to the Duke of Richmond, or, if not, whether he knew of any good officer whom he could recommend. On this he named Guy Carleton, who became the young duke's tutor. Three men afterwards well known in Canada were thus brought together long before any of them became celebrated. The Duke of Richmond went into Wolfe's regiment. The next duke became a governor-general of Canada, as Guy Carleton had been before him. And Wolfe—well, he was Wolfe!

One day he was presented to King Louis, from whom, seven years later, he was to wrest Quebec. 'They were all very gracious as far as courtesies, bows, and smiles go, for the Bourbons seldom speak to anybody.' Then he was presented to the clever Marquise de Pompadour, whom he found having her hair done up in the way which is still known by her name to every woman in the world. It was the regular custom of that time for

great ladies to receive their friends while the barbers were at work on their hair. 'She is extremely handsome and, by her conversation with the ambassador, I judge she must have a great deal of wit and understanding.' But it was her court intrigues and her shameless waste of money that helped to ruin France and Canada.

In the midst of all these gaieties Wolfe never forgot the mother whom he thought 'a match for all the beauties.' He sent her 'two black laced hoods and a *vestale* for the neck, such as the Queen of France wears.' Nor did he forget the much humbler people who looked upon him as 'the soldier's friend.' He tells his mother that his letters from Scotland have just arrived, and that 'the women of the regiment take it into their heads to write to me sometimes.' Here is one of their letters, marked on the outside, 'The Petition of Anne White':

> Collonnell,—Being a True Noble-hearted Pittyful gentleman and Officer your Worship will excuse these few Lines concerning ye husband of ye undersigned, Sergt. White, who not from his own fault is not behaving as Hee should

towards me and his family, although good and faithfull till the middle of November last.

We may be sure 'Sergt. White' had to behave 'as Hee should' when Wolfe returned!

In April, to his intense disgust, Wolfe was again in Glasgow.

> We are all sick, officers and soldiers. In two days we lost the skin off our faces with the sun, and the third were shivering in great coats. My cousin Goldsmith has sent me the finest young pointer that ever was seen; he eclipses Workie, and outdoes all. He sent me a fishing-rod and wheel at the same time, of his own workmanship. This, with a salmon-rod from my uncle Wat, your flies, and my own guns, put me in a condition to undertake the Highland sport. We have plays, we have concerts, we have balls, with dinners and suppers of the most execrable food upon earth, and wine that approaches to poison. The men of Glasgow drink till they are excessively drunk. The ladies are cold to everything but a bagpipe—I wrong them—there is not one that does not melt away at the sound of money.'

By the end of this year, however, he had left Scotland for good. He did not like the country as he saw it. But the times were greatly against his doing so. Glasgow was not at all a pleasant place in those narrowly provincial days for any one who had seen much of the world. The Highlands were as bad. They were full of angry Jacobites, who could never forgive the redcoats for defeating Prince Charlie. Yet Wolfe was not against the Scots as a whole; and we must never forget that he was the first to recommend the raising of those Highland regiments which have fought so nobly in every British war since the mighty one in which he fell.

During the next year and part of the year following, 1754-55, Wolfe was at Exeter, where the entertainments seem to have been more to his taste than those at Glasgow. A lady who knew him well at this time wrote: 'He was generally ambitious to gain a tall, graceful woman to be his partner, as well as a good dancer. He seemed emulous to display every kind of virtue and gallantry that would render him amiable.'

In 1755 the Seven Years' Peace was coming to an end in Europe. The shadow of the Seven Years' War was already falling darkly

across the prospect in America. Though Wolfe did not leave for the front till 1757, he was constantly receiving orders to be ready, first for one place and then for another. So early as February 18, 1755, he wrote to his mother what he then thought might be a farewell letter. It is full of the great war; but personal affairs of the deeper kind were by no means forgotten. 'The success of our fleet in the beginning of the war is of the utmost importance.' 'It will be sufficient comfort to you both to reflect that the Power which has hitherto preserved me may, if it be His pleasure, continue to do so. If not, it is but a few days more or less, and those who perish in their duty and the service of their country die honourably.'

The end of this letter is in a lighter vein. But it is no less characteristic: it is all about his dogs. 'You are to have Flurry instead of Romp. The two puppies I must desire you to keep a little longer. I can't part with either of them, but must find good and secure quarters for them as well as for my friend Cæsar, who has great merit and much good humour. I have given Sancho to Lord Howe, so that I am reduced to two spaniels and one pointer.' It is strange that in the many books about

dogs which mention the great men who have been fond of them—and most great men are fond of dogs—not one says a word about Wolfe. Yet 'my friend Cæsar, who has great merit and much good humour,' deserves to be remembered with his kind master just as much, in his way, as that other Cæsar, the friend of Edward VII, who followed his master to the grave among the kings and princes of a mourning world.

CHAPTER IV

THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

1756-1763

WOLFE'S Quebec campaign marked the supreme crisis of the greatest war the British Empire ever waged: the war, indeed, that made the Empire. To get a good, clear view of anything so vast, so complex, and so glorious, we must first look at the whole course of British history to see how it was that France and England ever became such deadly rivals. It is quite wrong to suppose that the French and British were always enemies, though they have often been called 'historic' and 'hereditary' foes, as if they never could make friends at all. As a matter of fact, they have had many more centuries of peace than of war; and ever since the battle of Waterloo, in 1815, they have been growing friendlier year by year. But this happy state of affairs is chiefly because, as we now say, their 'vital interests no longer clash'; that is, they do not both desire the

same thing so keenly that they have to fight for it.

Their vital interests do not clash now. But they did clash twice in the course of their history. The first time was when both governments wished to rule the same parts of the land of France. The second time was when they both wished to rule the same parts of the oversea world. Each time there was a long series of wars, which went on inevitably until one side had completely driven its rival from the field.

The first long series of wars took place chiefly in the fourteenth century and is known to history as the Hundred Years' War. England held, and was determined to hold, certain parts of France. France was determined never to rest till she had won them for herself. Whatever other things the two nations were supposed to be fighting about, this was always the one cause of strife that never changed and never could change till one side or other had definitely triumphed. France won. There were glorious English victories at Cressy and Agincourt. Edward III and Henry V were two of the greatest soldiers of any age. But, though the English often won the battles, the French won the war.

The French had many more men, they fought near their own homes, and, most important of all, the war was waged chiefly on land. The English had fewer men, they fought far away from their homes, and their ships could not help them much in the middle of the land, except by bringing over soldiers and food to the nearest coast. The end of it all was that the English armies were worn out; and the French armies, always able to raise more and more fresh men, drove them, step by step, out of the land completely.

The second long series of wars took place chiefly in the eighteenth century. These wars have never been given one general name; but they should be called the Second Hundred Years' War, because that is what they really were. They were very different from the wars that made up the first Hundred Years' War, because this time the fight was for oversea dominions, not for land in Europe. Of course navies had a good deal to do with the first Hundred Years' War and armies with the second. But the navies were even more important in the second than the armies in the first. The Second Hundred Years' War, the one in which Wolfe did such a mighty deed, began with the fall of the Stuart kings of

England in 1688 and went on till the battle of Waterloo in 1815. But the beginning and end that meant most to the Empire were the naval battles of La Hogue in 1692 and Trafalgar in 1805. Since Trafalgar the Empire has been able to keep what it had won before, and to go on growing as well, because all its different parts are joined together by the sea, and because the British Navy has been, from that day to this, stronger than any other navy in the world.

How the French and British armies and navies fought on opposite sides, either alone or with allies, all over the world, from time to time, for these hundred and twenty-seven years; how all the eight wars with different names formed one long Second Hundred Years' War; and how the British Navy was the principal force that won the whole of this war, made the Empire, and gave Canada safety then, as it gives her safety now—all this is much too long a story to tell here. But the gist of it may be told in a very few words, at least in so far as it concerns the winning of Canada and the deeds of Wolfe.

The name 'Greater Britain' is often used to describe all the parts of the British Empire which lie outside of the old mother country.

This 'Greater Britain' is now so vast and well established that we are apt to forget those other empires beyond the seas which, each in its own day, surpassed the British Empire of the same period. There was a Greater Portugal, a Greater Spain, a Greater Holland, and a Greater France. France and Holland still have large oversea possessions; and a whole new-world continent still speaks the languages of Spain and Portugal. But none of them has kept a growing empire oversea as their British rival has. What made the difference? The two things that made all the difference in the world were freedom and sea-power. We cannot stop to discuss freedom, because that is more the affair of statesmen; but, at the same time, we must not forget that the side on which Wolfe fought was the side of freedom. The point for us to notice here is that all the freedom and all the statesmen and all the soldiers put together could never have made a Greater Britain, especially against all those other rivals, unless Wolfe's side had also been the side of sea-power.

Now, sea-power means more than fighting power at sea; it means trading power as well. But a nation cannot trade across the sea against its rivals if its own ships are captured and

theirs are not. And long before the Second Hundred Years' War with France the other sea-trading empires had been gradually giving way, because in time of war their ships were always in greater danger than those of the British were. After the English Navy had defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588 the Spaniards began, slowly but surely, to lose their chance of making a permanent Greater Spain. After the great Dutch War, when Blake defeated Van Tromp in 1653, there was no further chance of a permanent Greater Holland. And, even before the Dutch War and the Armada, the Portuguese, who had once ruled the Indian Ocean and who had conquered Brazil, were themselves conquered by Spain and shut out from all chance of establishing a Greater Portugal.

So the one supreme point to be decided by the Second Hundred Years' War lay between only two rivals, France and Britain. Was there to be a Greater France or a Greater Britain across the seas? The answer depended on the rival navies. Of course, it involved many other elements of national and Imperial power on both sides. But no other elements of power could have possibly prevailed against a hostile and triumphant navy.

Everything that went to make a Greater France or a Greater Britain had to cross the sea—men, women, and children, horses and cattle, all the various appliances a civilized people must take with them when they settle in a new country. Every time there was war there were battles at sea, and these battles were nearly always won by the British. Every British victory at sea made it harder for French trade, because every ship between France and Greater France ran more risk of being taken, while every ship between Britain and Greater Britain stood a better chance of getting safely through. This affected everything on both competing sides in America. British business went on. French business almost stopped dead. Even the trade with the Indians living a thousand miles inland was changed in favour of the British and against the French, as all the guns and knives and beads and everything else that the white man offered to the Indian in exchange for his furs had to come across the sea, which was just like an enemy's country to every French ship, but just like her own to every British one. Thus the victors at sea grew continually stronger in America, while the losers grew correspondingly weaker. When peace came, the French only had time enough

to build new ships and start their trade again before the next war set them back once more; while the British had nearly all their old ships, all those they had taken from the French, and many new ones.

But where did Wolfe come in? He came in at the most important time and place of all, and he did the most important single deed of all. This brings us to the consideration of how the whole of the Second Hundred Years' War was won, not by the British Navy alone, much less by the Army alone, but by the united service of both, fighting like the two arms of one body, the Navy being the right arm and the Army the left. The heart of this whole Second Hundred Years' War was the Seven Years' War; the British part of the Seven Years' War was then called the 'Maritime War'; and the heart of the 'Maritime War' was the winning of Canada, in which the decisive blow was dealt by Wolfe.

We shall see presently how Navy and Army worked together as a united service in 'joint expeditions' by sea and land, how Wolfe took part in two other joint expeditions before he commanded the land force of the one at Quebec, and how the mighty empire-making statesman, William Pitt, won the day for

Britain and for Greater Britain, with Lord Anson at the head of the Navy to help him, and Saunders in command at the front. It was thus that the age-long vexed question of a Greater France or a Greater Britain in America was finally decided by the sword. The conquering sword was that of the British Empire as a whole. But the hand that wielded it was Pitt; the hilt was Anson, the blade was Saunders, and the point was Wolfe.

CHAPTER V

LOUISBOURG

1758

In 1755 Wolfe was already writing what he thought were farewell letters before going off to the war. And that very year the war, though not formally declared till the next, actually did break out in America, where a British army under Braddock, with Washington as his aide-de-camp, was beaten in Ohio by the French and Indians. Next year the French, owing to the failure of Admiral Byng and the British fleet to assist the garrison, were able to capture Minorca in the Mediterranean; while their new general in Canada, Montcalm, Wolfe's great opponent, took Oswego. The triumph of the French fleet at Minorca made the British people furious. Byng was court-martialled, found guilty of failure to do his utmost to save Minorca, and condemned to death. In spite of Pitt's efforts to save him, the sentence was carried out and he was shot

WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM

From the National Portrait Gallery

on the quarter-deck of his own flagship. Two other admirals, Hawke and Saunders, both of whom were soon to see service with Wolfe, were then sent out as a 'cargo of courage' to retrieve the British position at sea. By this time preparations were being hurried forward on every hand. Fleets were fitting out. Armies were mustering. And, best of all, Pitt was just beginning to make his influence felt.

In 1757, the third year of war, things still went badly for the British at the front. In America Montcalm took Fort William Henry, and a British fleet and army failed to accomplish anything against Louisbourg. In Europe another British fleet and army were fitted out to go on another joint expedition, this time against Rochefort, a great seaport in the west of France. The senior staff officer, next to the three generals in command, was Wolfe, now thirty years of age. The admiral in charge of the fleet was Hawke, as famous a fighter as Wolfe himself. A little later, when both these great men were known throughout the whole United Service, as well as among the millions in Britain and in Greater Britain, their names were coupled in countless punning toasts, and patriots from Canada to Calcutta would stand up to drink a health to 'the eye of a Hawke

and the heart of a Wolfe.' But Wolfe was not a general yet; and the three pottering old men who were generals at Rochefort could not make up their minds to do anything but talk. These generals had been ordered to take Rochefort by complete surprise. But after spending five days in front of it, so that every Frenchman could see what they had come for, they decided to countermand the attack and sail home.

Wolfe was a very angry and disgusted man. Yet, though this joint expedition was a disgraceful failure, he had learned some useful lessons, which he was presently to turn to good account. He saw, at least, what such expeditions should not attempt; and that a general should act boldly, though wisely, with the fleet. More than this, he had himself made a plan which his generals were too timid to carry out; and this plan was so good that Pitt, now in supreme control for the next four years, made a note of it and marked him down for promotion and command.

Both came sooner than any one could have expected. Pitt was sick of fleets and armies that did nothing but hold councils of war and then come back to say that the enemy could not be safely attacked. He made up his mind

to send out real fighters with the next joint expedition. So in 1758 he appointed Wolfe as the junior of the three brigadier-generals under Amherst, who was to join Admiral Boscawen—nicknamed 'Old Dreadnought'—in a great expedition meant to take Louisbourg for good and all.

Louisbourg was the greatest fortress in America. It was in the extreme east of Canada, on the island of Cape Breton, near the best fishing-grounds, and on the flank of the ship channel into the St Lawrence. A fortress there, in which French fleets could shelter safely, was like a shield for New France and a sword against New England. In 1745, just before the outbreak of the Jacobite rebellion in Scotland, an army of New Englanders under Sir William Pepperrell, with the assistance of Commodore Warren's fleet, had taken this fortress. But at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, when Wolfe had just come of age, it was given back to France.

Ten years later, when Wolfe went out to join the second army that was sent against it, the situation was extremely critical. Both French and British strained every nerve, the one to hold, the other to take, the greatest fortress in America. A French fleet sailed

from Brest in the spring and arrived safely. But it was not nearly strong enough to attempt a sea-fight off Louisbourg, and three smaller fleets that were meant to join it were all smashed up off the coast of France by the British, who thus knew, before beginning the siege, that Louisbourg could hardly expect any help from outside. Hawke was one of the British smashers this year. The next year he smashed up a much greater force in Quiberon Bay, and so made 'the eye of a Hawke and the heart of a Wolfe' work together again, though they were thousands of miles apart and one directed a fleet while the other inspired an army.

The fortress of Louisbourg was built beside a fine harbour with an entrance still further defended by a fortified island. It was garrisoned by about four thousand four hundred soldiers. Some of these were hired Germans, who cared nothing for the French; and the French-Canadian and Indian irregulars were not of much use at a regular siege. The British admiral Boscawen had a large fleet, and General Amherst an army twelve thousand strong. Taking everything into account, by land and sea, the British united service at the siege was quite three times as strong as the French

united service. But the French ships, manned by three thousand sailors, were in a good harbour, and they and the soldiers were defended by thick walls with many guns. Besides, the whole defence was conducted by Drucour, as gallant a leader as ever drew sword.

Boscawen was chosen by Pitt for the same reason as Wolfe had been, because he was a fighter. He earned his nickname of 'Old Dreadnought' from the answer he made one night in the English Channel when the officer of the watch called him to say that two big French ships were bearing down on his single British one. 'What are we to do, sir?' asked the officer. 'Do?' shouted Boscawen, springing out of his berth, 'Do?—Why, damn 'em, fight 'em, of course!' And they did. Amherst was the slow-and-sure kind of general; but he had the sense to know a good man when he saw one, and to give Wolfe the chance of trying his own quick-and-sure way instead.

A portion of the British fleet under Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Hardy had been cruising off Louisbourg for some time before Boscawen's squadron hove in sight on June 2. This squadron was followed by more than

twice its own number of ships carrying the army. All together, there were a hundred and fifty-seven British vessels, besides Hardy's covering squadron. Of course, the men could not be landed under the fire of the fortress. But two miles south of it, and running westward from it for many miles more, was Gabarus Bay with an open beach. For several days the Atlantic waves dashed against the shore so furiously that no boat could live through their breakers. But on the eighth the three brigades of infantry made for three different points,[1] respectively two, three, and four miles from the fortress. The French sent out half the garrison to shoot down the first boatloads that came in on the rollers. To cover the landing, some of Boscawen's ships moved in as close as they could and threw shells inshore: but without dislodging the enemy.

Each of the three brigades had its own flag —one red, another blue, and the third white. Wolfe's brigade was the red, the one farthest west from Louisbourg, and Wolfe's did the fighting. While the boats rose and fell on the gigantic rollers and the enemy's cannon roared and the waves broke in thunder on the beach,

[1] White Point, Flat Point, and Kennington Cove. See the accompanying Map of the siege.

VIEW OF LOUISBOURG IN 1758

From an engraving in the Dominion Archives

Wolfe was standing up in the stern-sheets, scanning every inch of the ground to see if there was no place where a few men could get a footing and keep it till the rest had landed. He had first-rate soldiers with him : grenadiers, Highlanders, and light infantry.

The boats were now close in, and the French were firing cannon and muskets into them right and left. One cannon-ball whizzed across Wolfe's own boat and smashed his flagstaff to splinters. Just then three young light infantry officers saw a high ledge of rocks, under shelter of which a few men could form up. Wolfe, directing every movement with his cane, like Gordon in China a century later, shouted to the others to follow them ; and then, amid the crash of artillery and the wild welter of the surf, though many boats were smashed and others upset, though some men were shot and others drowned, the landing was securely made. 'Who were the first ashore?' asked Wolfe, as the men were forming up under the ledge. Two Highlanders were pointed out. 'Good fellows!' he said, as he went up to them and handed each a guinea.

While the ranks were forming on the beach, the French were firing into them and men were dropping fast. But every gap was closed as soon

as it was made. Directly Wolfe saw he had enough men he sprang to the front; whereupon they all charged after him, straight at the batteries on the crest of the rising shore. Here there was some wild work for a minute or two, with swords, bayonets, and muskets all hard at it. But the French now saw, to their dismay, that thousands of other redcoats were clambering ashore, nearer in to Louisbourg, and that these men would cut them off if they waited a moment longer. So they turned and ran, hotly pursued, till they were safe in under the guns of the fortress. A deluge of shot and shell immediately belched forth against the pursuing British, who wisely halted just out of range.

After this exciting commencement Amherst's guns, shot, shell, powder, stores, food, tents, and a thousand other things had all to be landed on the surf-lashed, open beach. It was the sailors' stupendous task to haul the whole of this cumbrous material up to the camp. The bluejackets, however, were not the only ones to take part in the work, for the ships' women also turned to, with the best of a gallant goodwill. In a few days all the material was landed; and Amherst, having formed his camp, sat down to conduct the siege.

Louisbourg harbour faces east, runs in westward nearly a mile, and is over two miles from north to south. The north and south points, however, on either side of its entrance, are only a mile apart. On the south point stood the fortress; on the north the lighthouse; and between were several islands, rocks, and bars that narrowed the entrance for ships to only three cables, or a little more than six hundred yards. Wolfe saw that the north point, where the lighthouse stood, was undefended, and might be seized and used as a British battery to smash up the French batteries on Goat Island at the harbour mouth. Acting on this idea, he marched with twelve hundred men across the stretch of country between the British camp and the lighthouse. The fleet brought round his guns and stores and all other necessaries by sea. A tremendous bombardment then silenced every French gun on Goat Island. This left the French nothing for their defence but the walls of Louisbourg itself.

Both French and British soon realized that the fall of Louisbourg was only a question of time. But time was everything to both. The British were anxious to take Louisbourg and then sail up to Quebec and take it by

a sudden attack while Montcalm was engaged in fighting Abercromby's army on Lake Champlain. The French, of course, were anxious to hold out long enough to prevent this; and Drucour, their commandant at Louisbourg, was just the man for their purpose. His wife, too, was as brave as he. She used to go round the batteries cheering up the gunners, and paying no more attention to the British shot and shell than if they had been only fireworks. On June 18, just before Wolfe's lighthouse batteries were ready to open fire, Madame Drucour set sail in the venturesome *Echo*, a little French man-of-war that was making a dash for it, in the hope of carrying the news to Quebec. But after a gallant fight the *Echo* had to haul down her colours to the *Juno* and the *Sutherland*. We shall hear more of the *Sutherland* at the supreme moment of Wolfe's career.

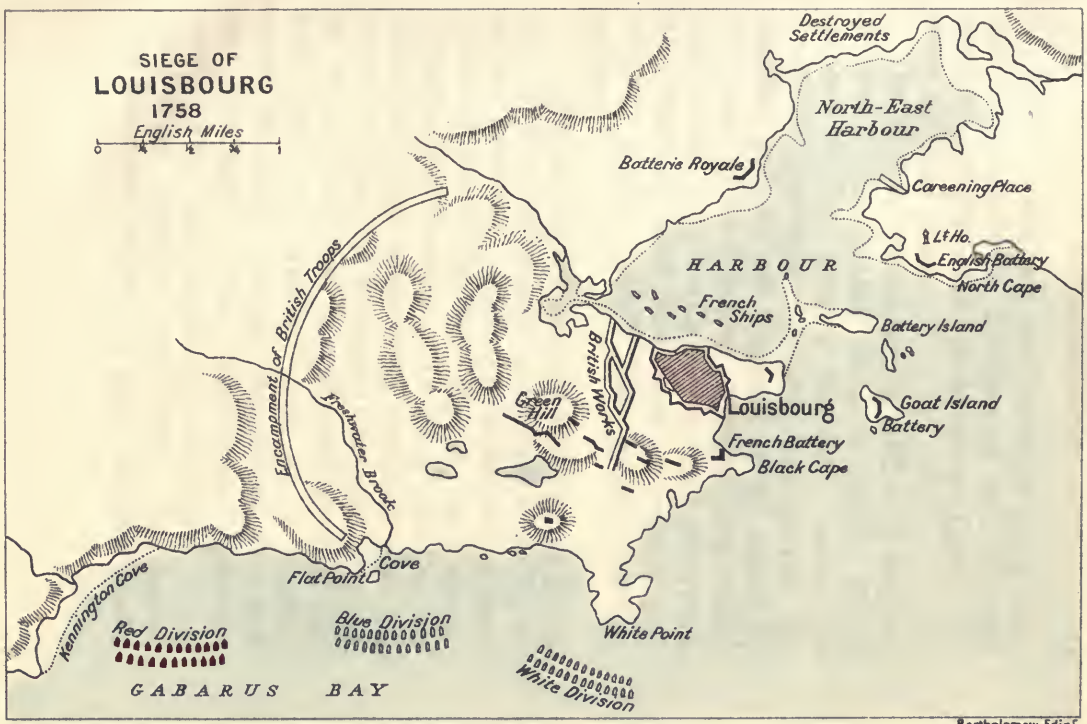
Nothing French, not even a single man, could now get into or out of Louisbourg. But Drucour still kept the flag up, and sent out parties at night to harass his assailants. One of these surprised a British post, killed Lord Dundonald who commanded it, and retired safely after being almost cut off by British re-

inforcements. Though Wolfe had silenced the island batteries and left the entrance open enough for Boscawen to sail in, the admiral hesitated because he thought he might lose too many ships by risking it. Then the French promptly sank some of their own ships at the entrance to keep him out. But six hundred British sailors rowed in at night and boarded and took the only two ships remaining afloat. The others had been blown up a month before by British shells fired by naval gunners from Amherst's batteries. Drucour was now in a terrible plight. Not a ship was left. He was completely cut off by land and sea. Many of his garrison were dead, many more were lying sick or wounded. His foreigners were ready for desertion. His French Canadians had grown down-hearted. All the non-combatants wished him to surrender at once. What else could he do but give in? On July 27 he hauled down the fleurs-de-lis from the great fortress. But he had gained his secondary object; for it was now much too late in the year for the same British force to begin a new campaign against Quebec.

Wolfe, like Nelson and Napoleon, was never content to 'let well enough alone,' if anything better could possibly be done. When

the news came of Montcalm's great victory over Abercromby at Ticonderoga, he told Amherst he was ready to march inland at once with reinforcements. And after Louisbourg had surrendered and Boscawen had said it was too late to start for Quebec, he again volunteered to do any further service that Amherst required. The service he was sent on was the soldier's most disgusting duty; but he did it thoroughly, though he would have preferred anything else. He went with Hardy's squadron to destroy the French settlements along the Gulf of St Lawrence, so as to cut off their supplies from the French in Quebec before the next campaign.

After Rochefort Wolfe had become a marked man. After Louisbourg he became an Imperial hero. The only other the Army had yet produced in this war was Lord Howe, who had been killed in a skirmish just before Ticonderoga. Wolfe knew Howe well, admired him exceedingly, and called him 'the noblest Englishman that has appeared in my time, and the best soldier in the army.' He would have served under him gladly. But Howe—young, ardent, gallant, yet profound—was dead; and the hopes of discerning judges were centred


SIEGE OF
LOUISBOURG
1758
English Miles
0
½
1
Destroyed Settlements
North-East Harbour
Batteris Royale
Careening Place
Lt Ho.
English Battery
North Cape
HARBOUR
French Ships
Battery Island
Encampment of British Troops
British Works
Green Hill
Louisbourg
Goat Island Battery
French Battery
Black Cape
Freshwater Brook
Cove
Flat Point
Kennington Cove
Red Division
Blue Division
White Division
White Point
GABARUS BAY
Bartholomew, Edin.

on Wolfe. The war had not been going well, and this victory at Louisbourg was the first that the British people could really rejoice over with all their heart.

The British colonies went wild with delight. Halifax had a state ball, at which Wolfe danced to his heart's content; while his unofficial partners thought themselves the luckiest girls in all America to be asked by the hero of Louisbourg. Boston and Philadelphia had large bonfires and many fireworks. The chief people of New York attended a gala dinner. Every church had special thanksgivings.

In England the excitement was just as great, and Wolfe's name and fame flew from lip to lip all over the country. Parliament passed special votes of thanks. Medals were struck to celebrate the event. The king stood on his palace steps to receive the captured colours, which were carried through London in triumph by the Guards and the Household Brigade. And Pitt, the greatest—and, in a certain sense, the only—British statesman who has ever managed people, parliament, government, navy, and army, all together, in a world-wide Imperial war—Pitt, the eagle-eyed and lion-hearted, at once marked Wolfe

down again for higher promotion and, this time, for the command of an army of his own. And ever since the Empire Year of 1759 the world has known that Pitt was right.

CHAPTER VI

QUEBEC

1759

In October 1758 Wolfe sailed from Halifax for England with Boscawen and very nearly saw a naval battle off Land's End with the French fleet returning to France from Quebec. The enemy, however, slipped away in the dark. On November 1 he landed at Portsmouth. He had been made full colonel of a new regiment, the 67th Foot (Hampshires), and before going home to London he set off to see it at Salisbury.[1] Wolfe's old regiment, the 20th (Lancashire Fusiliers), was now in Germany, fighting under the command of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, and was soon to win more laurels at Minden, the first of the three great British

[1] Ten years later a Russian general saw this regiment at Minorca and was loud in his praise of its all-round excellence, when Wolfe's successor in the colonelcy, Sir James Campbell, at once said: 'The only merit due to me is the strictness with which I have followed the system introduced by the hero of Quebec.'

victories of 1759 — Minden, Quebec, and Quiberon.

Though far from well, Wolfe was as keen as ever about anything that could possibly make him fit for command. He picked out the best officers with a sure eye: generals and colonels, like Carleton; captains, like Delaune, a man made for the campaigns in Canada, who, as we shall see later, led the 'Forlorn Hope' up the Heights of Abraham. Wolfe had also noted in a third member of the great Howe family a born leader of light infantry for Quebec. Wolfe was very strong on light infantry, and trained them to make sudden dashes with a very short but sharp surprise attack followed by a quick retreat under cover. One day at Louisbourg an officer said this reminded him of what Xenophon wrote about the Carduchians who harassed the rear of the world-famous 'Ten Thousand.' 'I had it from Xenophon' was Wolfe's reply. Like all great commanders, Wolfe knew what other great commanders had done and thought, no matter to what age or nation they belonged: Greek, Roman, German, French, British, or any other. Years before this he had recommended a young officer to study the Prussian Army Regulations and Vauban's book on

Sieges. Nor did he forget to read the lives of men like Scanderbeg and Ziska, who could teach him many unusual lessons. He kept his eyes open everywhere, all his life long, on men and things and books. He recommended his friend, Captain Rickson, who was then in Halifax, to read Montesquieu's not yet famous book *The Spirit of Laws*, because it would be useful for a government official in a new country. Writing home to his mother from Louisbourg about this new country, that is, before Canada had become British, before there was much more than a single million of English-speaking people in the whole New World, and before most people on either side of the Atlantic understood what a great over-sea empire meant at all, he said: 'This will, sometime hence, be a vast empire, the seat of power and learning. Nature has refused them nothing, and there will grow a people out of our little spot, England, that will fill this vast space, and divide this great portion of the globe with the Spaniards, who are possessed of the other half of it.'

On arriving in England Wolfe had reported his presence to the commander-in-chief, Lord Ligonier, requesting leave of absence in order that he might visit his relatives. This was

granted, and the Wolfe family met together once more and for the last time.

Though he said little about it, Wolfe must have snatched some time for Katherine Lowther, his second love, to whom he was now engaged. What had happened between him and his first love, Miss Lawson, will probably never be known. We know that his parents were opposed to his marrying her. Perhaps, too, she may not have been as much in love as he was. But, for whatever reason, they parted. Then he fell in love with beautiful Katherine Lowther, a sister to the Earl of Lonsdale and afterwards Duchess of Bolton.

Meanwhile Pitt was planning for his Empire Year of 1759, the year of Ferdinand at Minden, Wolfe at Quebec, and Hawke in Quiberon Bay. Before Pitt had taken the war in hand nearly everything had gone against the British. Though Clive had become the British hero of India in 1757, and Wolfe of Louisbourg in 1758, there had hitherto been more defeats than victories. Minorca had been lost in 1756; in America Braddock's army had been destroyed in 1755; and Montcalm had won victories at Oswego in 1756, at Fort William Henry in 1757, and at Ticonderoga in

1758. More than this, in 1759 the French were preparing fleets and armies to invade England, Ireland, and Scotland; and the British people were thinking rather of their own defence at home than of attacking the French abroad.

Pitt, however, rightly thought that vigorous attacks from the sea were the best means of defence at home. From London he looked out over the whole world: at France and her allies in the centre, at French India on his far left, and at French Canada on his far right; with the sea dividing his enemies and uniting his friends, if only he could hold its highways with the British Navy.

To carry out his plans Pitt sent a small army and a great deal of money to Frederick the Great, to help him in the middle of Europe against the Russians, Austrians, and French. At the same time he let Anson station fleets round the coast of France, so that no strong French force could get at Britain or Greater Britain, or go to help Greater France, without a fight at sea. Then, having cut off Canada from France and taken her outpost at Louisbourg, he aimed a death-blow at her very heart by sending Saunders, with a quarter of the whole British Navy, against Quebec, the

stronghold of New France, where the land attack was to be made by a little army of 9000 men under Wolfe. Even this was not the whole of Pitt's plan for the conquest of Canada. A smaller army was to be sent against the French on the Great Lakes, and a larger one, under Amherst, along the line of Lake Champlain, towards Montreal.

Pitt did a very bold thing when he took a young colonel and asked the king to make him a general and allow him to choose his own brigadiers and staff officers. It was a bold thing, because, whenever there is a position of honour to be given, the older men do not like being passed over and all the politicians who think of themselves first and their country afterwards wish to put in their own favourites. Wolfe, of course, had enemies. Dullards often think that men of genius are crazy, and some one had told the king that Wolfe was mad. 'Mad, is he?' said the king, remembering all the recent British defeats on land; 'then I hope he'll bite some of my other generals!' Wolfe was not able to give any of his seniors his own and Lord Howe's kind of divine 'madness' during that war. But he did give a touch of it to many of his juniors; with the result that his Quebec army was better officered

than any other British land force of the time.

The three brigadiers next in command to Wolfe—Monckton, Townshend, and Murray—were not chosen simply because they were all sons of peers, but because, like Howe and Boscawen, they were first-rate officers as well. Barré and Carleton were the two chief men on the staff. Each became celebrated in later days, Barré in parliament, and Carleton as both the saviour of Canada from the American attack in 1775 and the first British governor-general. Williamson, the best gunnery expert in the whole Army, commanded the artillery. The only troublesome officer was Townshend, who thought himself, and whose family and political friends thought him, at least as good a general as Wolfe, if not a better one. But even Townshend did his duty well. The army at Halifax was supposed to be twelve thousand, but its real strength was only nine thousand. The difference was mostly due to the ravages of scurvy and camp fever, both of which, in their turn, were due to the bad food supplied by rascally contractors. The action of the officers alone saved the situation from becoming desperate. Indeed, if it had not been for what the officers did for their men in the way of

buying better food, at great cost, out of their own not well-filled pockets, there might have been no army at all to greet Wolfe on his arrival in America.

The fleet was the greatest that had ever sailed across the seas. It included one-quarter of the whole Royal Navy. There were 49 men-of-war manned by 14,000 sailors and marines. There were also more than 200 vessels—transports, store ships, provision ships, etc.—manned by about 7000 merchant seamen. Thus there were at least twice as many sailors as soldiers at the taking of Quebec. Saunders was a most capable admiral. He had been flag-lieutenant during Anson's famous voyage round the world; then Hawke's best fighting captain during the war in which Wolfe was learning his work at Dettingen and Laffeldt; and then Hawke's second-in-command of the 'cargo of courage' sent out after Byng's disgrace at Minorca. After Quebec he crowned his fine career by being one of the best first lords of the Admiralty that ever ruled the Navy. Durell, his next in command, was slower than Amherst; and Amherst never made a short cut in his life, even to certain success. Holmes, the third admiral, was thoroughly efficient. Hood, a still better

admiral than any of those at Quebec, afterwards served under Holmes, and Nelson under Hood; which links Trafalgar with Quebec. But a still closer link with 'mighty Nelson' was Jervis, who took charge of Wolfe's personal belongings at Quebec the night before the battle and many years later became Nelson's commander-in-chief. Another Quebec captain who afterwards became a great admiral was Hughes, famous for his fights in India. But the man whose subsequent fame in the world at large eclipsed that of any other in this fleet was Captain Cook, who made the first good charts of Canadian waters some years before he became a great explorer in the far Pacific.

There was a busy scene at Portsmouth on February 17, when Saunders and Wolfe sailed in the flagship H.M.S. *Neptune*, of 90 guns and a crew of 750 men. She was one of the well-known old 'three-deckers,' those 'wooden walls of England' that kept the Empire safe while it was growing up. The guard of red-coated marines presented arms, and the hundreds of bluejackets were all in their places as the two commanders stepped on board. The naval officers on the quarter-deck were very spick and span in their black three-cornered hats, white wigs, long, bright blue,

gold-laced coats, white waistcoats and breeches and stockings, and gold-buckled shoes. The idea of having naval uniforms of blue and white and gold—the same colours that are worn to-day—came from the king's seeing the pretty Duchess of Bedford in a blue-and-white riding-habit, which so charmed him that he swore he would make the officers wear the same colours for the uniforms just then being newly tried. This was when the Duke of Bedford was first lord of the Admiralty, some years before Pitt's great expedition against Quebec.

The sailors were also in blue and white; but they were not so spick and span as the officers. They were a very rough-and-ready-looking lot. They wore small, soft, three-cornered black hats, bright blue jackets, open enough to show their coarse white shirts, and coarse white duck trousers. They had shoes without stockings on shore, and only bare feet on board. They carried cutlasses and pistols, and wore their hair in pigtails. They would be a surprising sight to modern eyes. But not so much so as the women! Ships and regiments in those days always had a certain number of women for washing and mending the clothes. There

was one woman to about every twenty men. They drew pay and were under regular orders, just like the soldiers and sailors. Sometimes they gave a willing hand in action, helping the 'powder-monkeys'—boys who had to pass the powder from the barrels to the gunners—or even taking part in a siege, as at Louisbourg.

The voyage to Halifax was long, rough, and cold, and Wolfe was sea-sick as ever. Strangely enough, these ships coming out to the conquest of Canada under St George's cross made land on St George's Day near the place where Cabot had raised St George's cross over Canadian soil before Columbus had set foot on the mainland of America. But though April 23 might be a day of good omen, it was a very bleak one that year off Cape Breton, where ice was packed for miles and miles along the coast. On the 30th the fleet entered Halifax. Slow old Durell was hurried off on May 5 with eight men-of-war and seven hundred soldiers under Carleton to try to stop any French ships from getting up to Quebec. Carleton was to go ashore at Isle-aux-Coudres, an island commanding the channel sixty miles below Quebec, and mark out a passage for the fleet through the 'Traverse' at the lower end of the island of Orleans, thirty miles higher up.

On the 13th Saunders sailed for Louisbourg, where the whole expedition was to meet and get ready. Here Wolfe spent the rest of May, working every day and all day. His army, with the exception of nine hundred American rangers, consisted of seasoned British regulars, with all the weaklings left behind; and it did his heart good to see them on parade. There was the 15th, whose officers still wear a line of black braid on their uniforms in mourning for his death. The 15th and five other regiments—the 28th, 43rd, 47th, 48th, and 58th—were English. But the 35th had been forty years in Ireland, and was Irish to a man. The whole seven regiments were dressed very much alike: three-cornered, stiff black hats with black cockades, white wigs, long-tailed red coats turned back with blue or white in front, where they were fastened only at the neck, white breeches, and long white gaiters coming over the knee. A very different corps was the 78th, or 'Fraser's,' Highlanders, one of the regiments Wolfe first recommended and Pitt first raised. Only fourteen years before the Quebec campaign these same Highlanders had joined Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender, in the famous '45.' They were mostly Roman Catholics, which accounts for

the way they intermarried with the French Canadians after the conquest. They had been fighting for the Stuarts against King George, and Wolfe, as we have seen, had himself fought against them at Culloden. Yet here they were now, under Wolfe, serving King George. They knew that the Stuart cause was lost for ever; and all of them, chiefs and followers alike, loved the noble profession of arms. The Highlanders then wore 'bonnets' like a high tam-o'-shanter, with one white curly feather on the left side. Their red coats were faced with yellow, and they wore the Fraser plaid hung from the shoulders and caught up, loopwise, on both hips. Their kilts were very short and not pleated. Badger sporrans, showing the head in the middle, red-and-white-diced hose, and buckled brogues completed their wild but martial dress, which was well set off by the dirks and claymores that swung to the stride of the mountaineer.

Each regiment had one company of grenadiers, picked out for their size, strength, and steadiness, and one company of light infantry, picked out for their quickness and good marksmanship. Sometimes all the grenadier companies would be put together in a separate battalion. The same thing was often done

with the light infantry companies, which were then led by Colonel Howe. Wolfe had also made up a small three-company battalion of picked grenadiers from the five regiments that were being left behind at Louisbourg to guard the Maritime Provinces. This little battalion became famous at Quebec as the 'Louisbourg Grenadiers.' The grenadiers all wore red and white, like the rest, except that their coats were buttoned up the whole way, and instead of the three-cornered hats they wore high ones like a bishop's mitre. The artillery wore blue-grey coats turned back with red, yellow braid, and half-moon-shaped black hats, with the points down towards their shoulders.

The only remaining regiment is of much greater interest in connection with a Canadian campaign. It was the 60th Foot, then called the Royal Americans, afterwards the Sixtieth Rifles or 'Old Sixtieth,' and now the King's Royal Rifle Corps. It was the first regiment of regulars ever raised in Greater Britain, and the first to introduce the rifle-green uniform now known all over the Empire, especially in Canada, where all rifle regiments still follow 'the 60th's' lead so far as that is possible. Many of its officers and men who returned

from the conquest of Canada to their homes in the British colonies were destined to move on to Canada with their families as United Empire Loyalists. This was their first war; and they did so well in it that Wolfe gave them the rifleman's motto they still bear in token of their smartness and dash—*Celer et Audax*. Unfortunately they did not then wear the famous 'rifle green' but the ordinary red. Unfortunately, too, the rifleman's green has no connection with the 'green jackets of American backwoodsmen in the middle of the eighteenth century.' The backwoodsmen were not dressed in green as a rule, and they never formed any considerable part of the regiment at any time. The first green uniform came in with the new 5th battalion in 1797; and the old 2nd and 3rd battalions, which fought under Wolfe, did not adopt it till 1815. It was not even of British origin, but an imitation of a German hussar uniform which was itself an imitation of one worn by the Hungarians, who have the senior hussars of the world. But though Wolfe's Royal Americans did not wear the rifle green, and though their coats and waistcoats were of common red, their uniforms differed from those of all other regiments at Quebec in several particulars. The

most remarkable difference was the absence of lace, an absence specially authorized only for this corps, and then only in view of special service and many bush fights in America. The double-breasted coats were made to button across, except at the top, where the lapels turned back, like the cuffs and coat-tails. All these 'turnbacks' and the breeches were blue. The very long gaiters, the waist and cross belts, the neckerchief and hat piping were white. Wearing this distinctively plain uniform, and led by their buglers and drummers in scarlet and gold, like state trumpeters, the Royal Americans could not, even at a distance, be mistaken for any other regiment.

On June 6 Saunders and Wolfe sailed for Quebec with a hundred and forty-one ships. Wolfe's work in getting his army safely off being over, he sat down alone in his cabin to make his will. His first thought was for Katherine Lowther, his *fiancée*, who was to have her own miniature portrait, which he carried with him, set in jewels and given back to her. Warde, Howe, and Carleton were each remembered. He left all the residue of his estate to 'my good mother,' his father having just died. More than a third of the whole will was taken up with providing for his ser-

vants. No wonder he was called 'the soldier's friend.'

There was a thrilling scene at Louisbourg as regiment after regiment marched down to the shore, with drums beating, bugles sounding, and colours flying. Each night, after drinking the king's health, they had drunk another toast—'British colours on every French fort, port, and garrison in North America.' Now here they were, the pick of the Army and Navy, off with Wolfe to raise those colours over Quebec, the most important military point on the whole continent. On they sailed, all together, till they reached the Saguenay, a hundred and twenty miles below Quebec. Here, on the afternoon of June 20, the sun shone down on a sight such as the New World had never seen before, and has never seen again. The river narrows opposite the Saguenay and is full of shoals and islands; so this was the last day the whole one hundred and forty-one vessels sailed together, in their three divisions, under those three ensigns—'The Red, White, and Blue'—which have made the British Navy loved, feared, and famous round the seven seas. What a sight it was! Thousands and thousands of soldiers and sailors crowded those

scores and scores of high-decked ships; while hundreds and hundreds of swelling sails gleamed white against the sun, across the twenty miles of blue St Lawrence.

Wolfe, however, was not there to see it. He had gone forward the day before. A dispatch-boat had come down from Durell to say that, in spite of his advanced squadron, Bougainville, Montcalm's ablest brigadier, had slipped through with twenty-three ships from France, bringing out a few men and a good deal of ammunition, stores, and food. This gave Quebec some sorely needed help. Besides, Montcalm had found out Pitt's plan; and nobody knew where the only free French fleet was now. It had wintered in the West Indies. But had it sailed for France or the St Lawrence? At the first streak of dawn on the 23rd Durell's look-out off Isle-aux-Coudres reported many ships coming up the river under a press of sail. Could the French West Indian fleet have slipped in ahead of Saunders, as Bougainville had slipped in ahead of Durell himself? There was a tense moment on board of Durell's squadron and in Carleton's camp, in the pale, grey light of early morning, as the bugles sounded, the boatswains blew their whistles and roared their orders, and all

hands came tumbling up from below and ran to battle quarters with a rush of swift bare feet. But the incoming vanship made the private British signal, and both sides knew that all was well.

For a whole week the great fleet of one hundred and forty-one ships worked their way through the narrow channel between Isle-aux-Coudres and the north shore, and then dared the dangers of the Traverse, below the island of Orleans, where the French had never passed more than one ship at a time, and that only with the greatest caution. The British went through quite easily, without a single accident. In two days the great Captain Cook had sounded and marked out the channel better than the French had in a hundred and fifty years; and so thoroughly was his work done that the British officers could handle their vessels in these French waters better without than with the French pilots. Old Captain Killick took the *Goodwill* through himself, just next ahead of the *Richmond*, on board of which was Wolfe. The captured French pilot in the *Goodwill* was sure she would be lost if she did not go slow and take more care. But Killick laughed at him and said: 'Damn me, but I 'll convince you an Englishman can go where a French-

man daren't show his nose!' And he did.

On June 26 Wolfe arrived at the west end of the island of Orleans, in full view of Quebec. The twenty days' voyage from Louisbourg had ended and the twelve weeks' siege had begun.

At this point we must take the map and never put it aside till the final battle is over. A whole book could not possibly make Wolfe's work plain to any one without the map. But with the map we can easily follow every move in this, the greatest crisis in both Wolfe's career and Canada's history.

What Wolfe saw and found out was enough to daunt any general. He had a very good army, but it was small. He could count upon the help of a mighty fleet, but even British fleets cannot climb hills or make an enemy come down and fight. Montcalm, however, was weakened by many things. The governor, Vaudreuil, was a vain, fussy, and spiteful fool, with power enough to thwart Montcalm at every turn. The intendant, Bigot, was the greatest knave ever seen in Canada, and the head of a gang of official thieves who robbed the country and the wretched French Canadians right and left. The French army, all together, numbered nearly seventeen thou-

sand, almost twice Wolfe's own; but the bulk of it was militia, half starved and badly armed. Both Vaudreuil and Bigot could and did interfere disastrously with the five different forces that should have been made into one army under Montcalm alone—the French regulars, the Canadian regulars, the Canadian militia, the French sailors ashore, and the Indians. Montcalm had one great advantage over Wolfe. He was not expected to fight or manœuvre in the open field. His duty was not to drive Wolfe away, or even to keep Amherst out of Canada. All he had to do was to hold Quebec throughout the summer. The autumn would force the British fleet to leave for ice-free waters. Then, if Quebec could only be held, a change in the fortunes of war, or a treaty of peace, might still keep Canada in French hands. Wolfe had either to tempt Montcalm out of Quebec or get into it himself; and he soon realized that he would have to do this with the help of Saunders alone; for Amherst in the south was crawling forward towards Montreal so slowly that no aid from him could be expected.

Montcalm's position certainly looked secure for the summer. His left flank was guarded by the Montmorency, a swift river that could

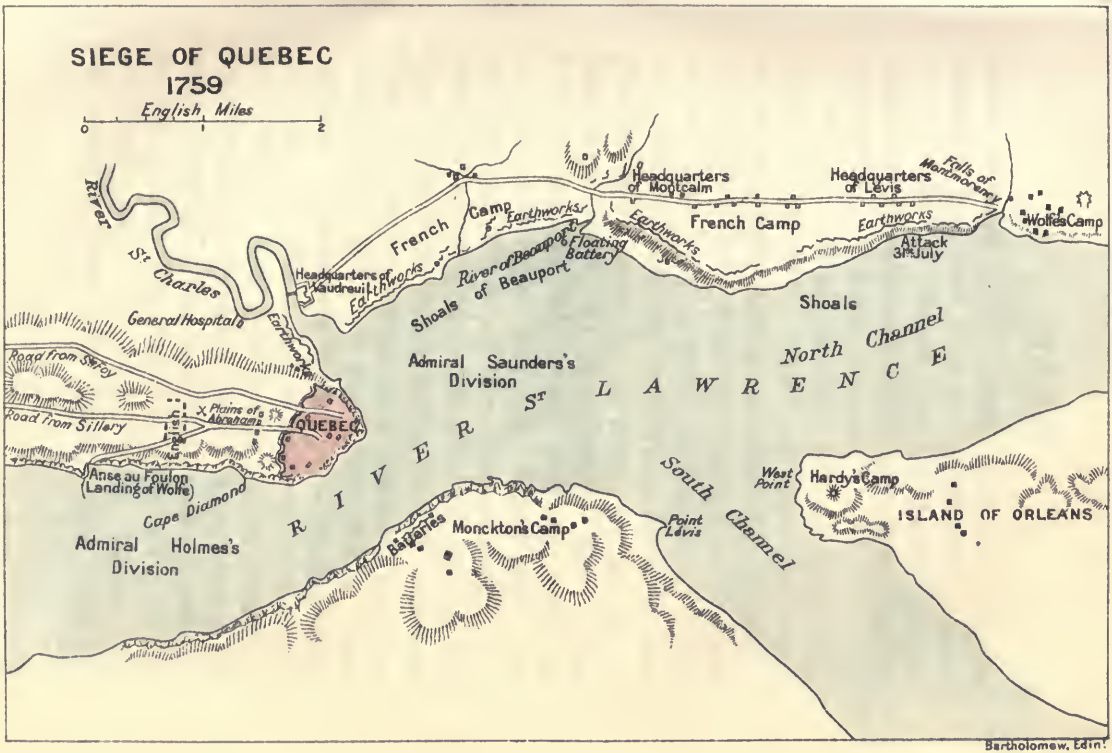
be forded only by a few men at a time in a narrow place, some miles up, where the dense bush would give every chance to his Indians and Canadians. His centre was guarded by entrenchments running from the Montmorency to the St Charles, six miles of ground, rising higher and higher towards Montmorency, all of it defended by the best troops and the bulk of the army, and none of it having an inch of cover for an enemy in front. The mouth of the St Charles was blocked by booms and batteries. Quebec is a natural fortress; and above Quebec the high, steep cliffs stretched for miles and miles. These cliffs could be climbed by a few men in several places; but nowhere by a whole army, if any defenders were there in force; and the British fleet could not land an army without being seen soon enough to draw plenty of defenders to the same spot. Forty miles above Quebec the St Lawrence channel narrows to only a quarter of a mile, and the down current becomes very swift indeed. Above this channel was the small French fleet, which could stop a much larger one trying to get up, or could even block most of the fairway by sinking some of its own ships. Besides all these defences of man and nature the French had floating batteries

along the north shore. They also held the Levis Heights on the south shore, opposite Quebec, so that ships crowded with helpless infantry could not, without terrible risk, run through the intervening narrows, barely a thousand yards wide.

A gale blowing down-stream was the first trouble for the British fleet. Many of the transports broke loose and a good deal of damage was done to small vessels and boats. Next night a greater danger threatened, when the ebb-tide, running five miles an hour, brought down seven French fireships, which suddenly burst into flame as they rounded the Point of Levy. There was a display of devil's fireworks such as few men have ever seen or could imagine. Sizzling, crackling, and roaring, the blinding flames leaped into the jet-black sky, lighting up the camps of both armies, where thousands of soldiers watched these engines of death sweep down on the fleet. Each of the seven ships was full of mines, blowing up and hurling shot and shell in all directions. The crowded mass of British vessels seemed doomed to destruction. But the first spurt of fire had hardly been noticed before the men in the guard boats began to row to the rescue. Swinging the grappling-

hooks round at arm's length, as if they were heaving the lead, the bluejackets made the fireships fast, the officers shouted, 'Give way!' and presently the whole infernal flotilla was safely stranded. But it was a close thing and very hot work, as one of the happy-go-lucky Jack tars said with more force than grace, when he called out to the boat beside him: 'Hullo, mate! Did you ever take hell in tow before?'

Vaudreuil now made Montcalm, who was under his orders, withdraw the men from the Levis Heights, and thus abandon the whole of the south shore in front of Quebec. Wolfe, delighted, at once occupied the same place, with half his army and most of his guns. Then he seized the far side of the Montmorency and made his main camp there, without, however, removing his hospitals and stores from his camp on the island of Orleans. So he now had three camps, not divided, but joined together, by the St Lawrence, where the fleet could move about between them in spite of anything the French could do. He then marched up the Montmorency to the fords, to try the French strength there, and to find out if he could cross the river, march down the open ground behind Montcalm, and attack him


SIEGE OF QUEBEC
1759
English Miles
0
1
2
River St Charles
French Camp
Earthworks
Headquarters of Montcalm
Headquarters of Lévis
Falls of Montmorency
French Camp
Earthworks
Wolfe's Camp
Attack 31st July
Headquarters of Vaudreuil
Earthworks
River of Beauport
Floating Battery
Shoals of Beauport
Shoals
General Hospital
Earthworks
Admiral Saunders's Division
North Channel
ST LAWRENCE RIVER
Road from Sillery
Road from Sillery
Plains of Abraham
QUEBEC
Anse au Foulon (Landing of Wolfe)
Cape Diamond
Admiral Holmes's Division
Barraries
Monckton's Camp
South Channel
Point Lévis
West Point
Hardy's Camp
ISLAND OF ORLEANS
Bartholomew. Edin.

from the rear. But he was repulsed at the first attempt, and saw that he could do no better at a second. Meanwhile his Levis batteries began a bombardment which lasted two months and reduced Quebec to ruins.

Yet he seemed as far off as ever from capturing the city. Battering down the houses of Quebec brought him no nearer to his object, while Montcalm's main body still stood securely in its entrenchments down at Beauport. Wolfe now felt he must try something decisive, even if desperate; and he planned an attack by land and water on the French left. Both French and British were hard at work on July 31. In the morning Wolfe sent one regiment marching up the Montmorency, as if to try the fords again, and another, also in full view of the French, up along the St Lawrence from the Levis batteries, as if it was to be taken over by the ships to the north shore above Quebec. Meanwhile Monckton's brigade was starting from the Point of Levy in row-boats, the *Centurion* was sailing down to the mouth of the Montmorency, two armed transports were being purposely run ashore on the beach at the top of the tide, and the *Pembroke*, *Trent*, *Lowestoff*, and *Racehorse* were taking up positions to cover the boats. The men-of-

war and Wolfe's batteries at Montmorency then opened fire on the point he wished to attack; and both of them kept it up for eight hours, from ten till six. All this time the Levis batteries were doing their utmost against Quebec. But Montcalm was not to be deceived. He saw that Wolfe intended to storm the entrenchments at the point at which the cannon were firing, and he kept the best of his army ready to defend it.

Wolfe and the Louisbourg Grenadiers were in the two armed transports when they grounded at ten o'clock. To his disgust and to Captain Cook's surprise both vessels stuck fast in the mud nearly half a mile from shore. This made the grenadiers' muskets useless against the advanced French redoubt, which stood at high-water mark, and which overmatched the transports, because both of these had grounded in such a way that they could not bring their guns to bear in reply. The stranded vessels soon became a death-trap. Wolfe's cane was knocked out of his hand by a cannon ball. Shells were bursting over the deck, smashing the masts to pieces and sending splinters of wood and iron flying about among the helpless grenadiers and gunners. There was nothing to do but order the men

back to the boats and wait. The tide was not low till four. The weather was scorchingly hot. A thunderstorm was brewing. The redoubt could not be taken. The transports were a failure. And every move had to be made in full view of the watchful Montcalm, whose entrenchments at this point were on the top of a grassy hill nearly two hundred feet above the muddy beach.

But Wolfe still thought he might succeed with the main attack at low tide, although he had not been able to prepare it at high tide. His Montmorency batteries seemed to be pitching their shells very thickly into the French, and his three brigades of infantry were all ready to act together at the right time. Accordingly, for the hottest hours of that scorching day, Monckton's men grilled in the boats while Townshend's and Murray's waited in camp. At four the tide was low and Wolfe ordered the landing to begin.

The tidal flats ran out much farther than any one had supposed. The heavily laden boats stuck on an outer ledge and had to be cleared, shoved off, refilled with soldiers, and brought round to another place. It was now nearly six o'clock; and both sides were eager

for the fray. Townshend's and Murray's brigades had forded the mouth of the Montmorency and were marching along to support the attack, when, suddenly and unexpectedly, the grenadiers spoiled it all! Wolfe had ordered the Louisbourg Grenadiers and the ten other grenadier companies of the army to form up and rush the redoubt. But, what with the cheering of the sailors as they landed the rest of Monckton's men, and their own eagerness to come to close quarters at once, the Louisbourg men suddenly lost their heads and charged before everything was ready. The rest followed them pell-mell; and in less than five minutes the redoubt was swarming with excited grenadiers, while the French who had held it were clambering up the grassy hill into the safer entrenchments.

The redoubt was certainly no place to stay in. It had no shelter towards its rear; and dozens of French cannon and thousands of French muskets were firing into it from the heights. An immediate retirement was the only proper course. But there was no holding the men now. They broke into another mad charge, straight at the hill. As they reached it, amid a storm of musket balls and grape-shot, the heavens joined in with a terrific storm

of their own. The rain burst in a perfect deluge; and the hill became almost impossible to climb, even if there had been no enemy pouring death-showers of fire from the top. When Wolfe saw what was happening he immediately sent officers running after the grenadiers to make them come back from the redoubt, and these officers now passed the word to retire at once. This time the grenadiers, all that were left of them, obeyed. Their two mad rushes had not lasted a quarter of an hour. Yet nearly half of the thousand men they started with were lying dead or wounded on that fatal ground.

Wolfe now saw that he was hopelessly beaten and that there was not a minute to lose in getting away. The boats could take only Monckton's men; and the rising tide would soon cut off Townshend's and Murray's from their camp beyond the mouth of the Montmorency. The two stranded transports, from which he had hoped so much that morning, were set on fire; and, under cover of their smoke and of the curtain of torrential rain, Monckton's crestfallen men got into their boats once more. Townshend's and Murray's brigades, enraged at not being brought into action, turned to march back by the way they

had come so eagerly only an hour before. They moved off in perfect order; but, as they left the battlefield, they waved their hats in defiance at the jeering Frenchmen, challenging them to come down and fight it out with bayonets hand to hand.

Many gallant deeds were done that afternoon; but none more gallant than those of Captain Ochterloney and Lieutenant Peyton, both grenadier officers in the Royal Americans. Ochterloney had just been wounded in a duel; but he said his country's honour came before his own, and, sick and wounded as he was, he spent those panting hours in the boats without a murmur and did all he could to form his men up under fire. In the second charge he fell, shot through the lungs, with Peyton beside him, shot through the leg. When Wolfe called the grenadiers back a rescue party wanted to carry off both officers, to save them from the scalping-knife. But Ochterloney said he would never leave the field after such a defeat; and Peyton said he would never leave his captain. Presently a Canadian regular came up with two Indians, grabbed Ochterloney's watch, sword and money, and left the Indians to finish him. One of these savages clubbed him with a musket, while the other shot him in the

chest and dashed in with a scalping-knife. In the meantime, Peyton crawled on his hands and knees to a double-barrelled musket and shot one Indian dead, but missed the other. This savage now left Ochterloney, picked up a bayonet and rushed at Peyton, who drew his dagger. A terrible life-and-death fight followed; but Peyton at last got a good point well driven home, straight through the Indian's heart. A whole scalping party now appeared. Ochterloney was apparently dead, and Peyton was too exhausted to fight any more. But, at this very moment, another British party came back for the rest of the wounded and carried Peyton off to the boats.

Then the Indians came back to scalp Ochterloney. By this time, however, some French regulars had come down, and one of them, finding Ochterloney still alive, drove off the Indians at the point of the bayonet, secured help, and carried him up the hill. Montcalm had him carefully taken into the General Hospital, where he was tenderly nursed by the nuns. Two days after he had been rescued, a French officer came out for his clothes and other effects. Wolfe then sent in twenty guineas for his rescuer, with a promise that, in

return for the kindness shown to Ochterloney, the General Hospital would be specially protected if the British took Quebec. Towards the end of August Ochterloney died; and both sides ceased firing while a French captain came out to report his death and return his effects.

This was by no means the only time the two enemies treated each other like friends. A party of French ladies were among the prisoners brought in to Wolfe one day; and they certainly had no cause to complain of him. He gave them a dinner, at which he charmed them all by telling them about his visit to Paris. The next morning he sent them into Quebec with his aide-de-camp under a flag of truce. Another time the French officers sent him a kind of wine which was not to be had in the British camp, and he sent them some not to be had in their own.

But the stern work of war went on and on, though the weary month of August did not seem to bring victory any closer than disastrous July. Wolfe knew that September was to be the end of the campaign, the now-or-never of his whole career. And, knowing this, he set to work—head and heart and soul—on making the plan that brought him victory, death, and everlasting fame.

CHAPTER VII

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

September 13, 1759

ON August 19 an aide-de-camp came out of the farmhouse at Montmorency which served as the headquarters of the British army to say that Wolfe was too ill to rise from his bed. The bad news spread like wildfire through the camp and fleet, and soon became known among the French. A week passed; but Wolfe was no better. Tossing about on his bed in a fever, he thought bitterly of his double defeat, of the critical month of September, of the grim strength of Quebec, formed by nature for a stronghold, and then—worse still—of his own weak body, which made him most helpless just when he should have been most fit for his duty.

Feeling that he could no longer lead in person, he dictated a letter to the brigadiers, sent them the secret instructions he had received from Pitt and the king, and asked them

to think over his three new plans for attacking Montcalm at Beauport. They wrote back to say they thought the defeats at the upper fords of the Montmorency and at the heights facing the St Lawrence showed that the French could not be beaten by attacking the Beauport lines again, no matter from what side the attack was made. They then gave him a plan of their own, which was, to convey the army up the St Lawrence and fight their way ashore somewhere between Cap Rouge, nine miles above Quebec, and Pointe-aux-Trembles, twenty-two miles above. They argued that, by making a landing there, the British could cut off Montcalm's communications with Three Rivers and Montreal, from which his army drew its supplies. Wolfe's letter was dictated from his bed of sickness on the 26th. The brigadiers answered him on the 29th. Saunders talked it all over with him on the 31st. Before this the fate of Canada had been an affair of weeks. Now it was a matter of days; for the morrow would dawn on the very last possible month of the siege—September.

After his talk with Saunders Wolfe wrote his last letter home to his mother, telling her of his desperate plight:

The enemy puts nothing to risk, and I can't in conscience put the whole army to risk. My antagonist has wisely shut himself up in inaccessible entrenchments, so that I can't get at him without spilling a torrent of blood, and that perhaps to little purpose. The Marquis de Montcalm is at the head of a great number of bad soldiers and I am at the head of a small number of good ones, that wish for nothing so much as to fight him; but the wary old fellow avoids an action, doubtful of the behaviour of his army. People must be of the profession to understand the disadvantages and difficulties we labour under, arising from the uncommon natural strength of the country.

On September 2 he wrote his last letter to Pitt. He had asked the doctors to 'patch him up,' saying that if they could make him fit for duty for only the next few days they need not trouble about what might happen to him afterwards. Their 'patching up' certainly cleared his fevered brain, for this letter was a masterly account of the whole siege and the plans just laid to bring it to an end. The style was so good, indeed, that Charles Townshend

said his brother George must have been the real author, and that Wolfe, whom he dubbed 'a fiery-headed fellow, only fit for fighting,' could not have done any more than sign his name. But when George Townshend's own official letter about the battle in which Wolfe fell was also published, and was found to be much less effective than Wolfe's, Selwyn went up to Charles Townshend and said: 'Look here, Charles, if your brother wrote Wolfe's letter, who the devil wrote your brother's?'

Wolfe did not try to hide anything from Pitt. He told him plainly about the two defeats and the terrible difficulties in the way of winning any victory. The whole letter is too long for quotation, and odd scraps from it give no idea of Wolfe's lucid style. But here are a few which tell the gist of the story:

> I found myself so ill, and am still so weak, that I begged the generals to consult together. They are all of opinion, that, as more ships and provisions are now got above the town, they should try, by conveying up five thousand men, to draw the enemy from his present position and bring him to an action. I have acquiesced in their proposal, and we are preparing to put

it into execution. The admiral will readily join in any measure for the public service. There is such a choice of difficulties that I own myself at a loss how to determine. The affairs of Great Britain I know require the most vigorous measures. You may be sure that the small part of the campaign which remains shall be employed, as far as I am able, for the honour of His Majesty and the interest of the nation. I am sure of being well seconded by the admirals and generals; happy if our efforts here can contribute to the success of His Majesty's arms in any other part of America.

On the 31st, the day he wrote to his mother and had his long talk with Saunders, Wolfe began to send his guns and stores away from the Montmorency camp. Carleton managed the removal very cleverly; and on September 3 only the five thousand infantry who were to go up the St Lawrence were left there. Wolfe tried to tempt Montcalm to attack him. But Montcalm knew better; and half suspected that Wolfe himself might make another attack on the Beauport lines. When everything was ready, all the men at the Point of Levy who could be spared put off in boats and rowed

over towards Beauport, just as Monckton's men had done on the disastrous last day of July. At the same time the main division of the fleet, under Saunders, made as if to support these boats, while the Levis batteries thundered against Quebec. Carleton gave the signal from the beach at Montmorency when the tide was high ; and the whole five thousand infantry marched down the hill, got into their boats, and rowed over to where the other boats were waiting. The French now prepared to defend themselves at once. But as the two divisions of boats came together, they both rowed off through the gaps between the men-of-war. Wolfe's army had broken camp and got safely away, right under the noses of the French, without the loss of a single man.

A whole week, from September 3 to 10, was then taken up with trying to see how the brigadiers' plan could be carried out.

This plan was good, as far as it went. An army is even harder to supply than a town would be if the town was taken up bodily and moved about the country. An army makes no supplies itself, but uses up a great deal. It must have food, clothing, arms, ammunition, stores of all kinds, and everything else it needs to keep it fit for action. So it must always

keep what are called 'communications' with the places from which it gets these supplies. Now, Wolfe's and Montcalm's armies were both supplied along the St Lawrence, Wolfe's from below Quebec and Montcalm's from above. But Wolfe had no trouble about the safety of his own 'communications,' since they were managed and protected by the fleet. Even before he first saw Quebec, a convoy of supply ships had sailed from the Maritime Provinces for his army under the charge of a man-of-war. And so it went on all through the siege. Including forty-nine men-of-war, no less than 277 British vessels sailed up to Quebec during this campaign; and not one of them was lost on the way, though the St Lawrence had then no lighthouses, buoys, or other aids to navigation, as it has now, and though the British officers themselves were compelled to take the ships through the worst places in these foreign and little-known waters. The result was that there were abundant supplies for the British army the whole time, thanks to the fleet.

But Montcalm was in a very different plight. Since the previous autumn, when Wolfe and Hardy had laid waste the coast of Gaspé, the supply of sea-fish had almost failed. Now the

whole country below Quebec had been cut off by the fleet, while most of the country round Quebec was being laid waste by the army. Wolfe's orders were that no man, woman, or child was to be touched, nor any house or other buildings burnt, if his own men were not attacked. But if the men of the country fired at his soldiers they were to be shot down, and everything they had was to be destroyed. Of course, women and children were strictly protected, under all circumstances, and no just complaint was ever made against the British for hurting a single one. But as the men persisted in firing, the British fired back and destroyed the farms where the firing took place, on the fair-play principle that it is right to destroy whatever is used to destroy you.

It thus happened that, except at a few little villages where the men had not fired on the soldiers, the country all round Quebec was like a desert, as far as supplies for the French were concerned. The only way to obtain anything for their camp was by bringing it down the St Lawrence from Montreal, Sorel, and Three Rivers. French vessels would come down as far as they dared and then send the supplies on in barges, which kept close in under the north

shore above Quebec, where the French outposts and batteries protected them from the British men-of-war that were pushing higher and higher up the river. Some supplies were brought in by land after they were put ashore above the highest British vessels. But as a hundred tons came far more easily by water than one ton by land, it is not hard to see that Montcalm's men could not hold out long if the St Lawrence near Quebec was closed to supplies.

Wolfe, Montcalm, the brigadiers, and every one else on both sides knew this perfectly well. But, as it was now September, the fleet could not go far up the much more difficult channel towards Montreal. If it did, and took Wolfe's army with it, the few French men-of-war might dispute the passage, and some sunken ships might block the way, at all events for a time. Besides, the French were preparing to repulse any landing up the river, between Cap Rouge, nine miles above Quebec, and Deschambault, forty miles above; and with good prospect of success, because the country favoured their irregulars. Moreover, if Wolfe should land many miles up, Montcalm might still hold out far down in Quebec for the few days remaining till October. If, on the other hand, the fleet went up and left Wolfe's

men behind, Montcalm would be safer than ever at Beauport and Quebec; because, how could Wolfe reach him without a fleet when he had failed to reach him with one?

The life-and-death question for Wolfe was how to land close enough above Quebec and soon enough in September to make Montcalm fight it out on even terms and in the open field.

The brigadiers' plan of landing high up seemed all right till they tried to work it out. Then they found troubles in plenty. There were several places for them to land between Cap Rouge, nine miles above Quebec, and Pointe-aux-Trembles, thirteen miles higher still. Ever since July 18 British vessels had been passing to and fro above Quebec; and in August, Murray, under the guard of Holmes's squadron, had tried his brigade against Pointe-aux-Trembles, where he was beaten back, and at Deschambault, twenty miles farther up, where he took some prisoners and burnt some supplies. To ward off further and perhaps more serious attacks from this quarter, Montcalm had been keeping Bougainville on the lookout, especially round Pointe-aux-Trembles, for several weeks before the brigadiers arranged their plan. Bougainville now had 2000 in-

fantry, all the mounted men—nearly 300—and all the best Indian and Canadian scouts, along the thirteen miles of shore between Cap Rouge and Pointe-aux-Trembles. His land and water batteries had also been made much stronger. He and Montcalm were in close touch and could send messages to each other and get an answer back within four hours.

On the 7th Wolfe and the brigadiers had a good look at every spot round Pointe-aux-Trembles. On the 8th and 9th the brigadiers were still there; while five transports sailed past Quebec on the 8th to join Holmes, who commanded the up-river squadron. Two of Wolfe's brigades were now on board the transports with Holmes. But the whole three were needed; and this need at once entailed another difficulty. A successful landing on the north shore above Quebec could only be made under cover of the dark; and Wolfe could not bring the third brigade, under cover of night, from the island of Orleans and the Point of Levy, and land it with the other two twenty miles up the river before daylight. The tidal stream runs up barely five hours, while it runs down more than seven; and winds are mostly down. Next, if, instead

of sailing, the third brigade marched twenty miles at night across very rough country on the south shore, it would arrive later than ever. Then, only one brigade could be put ashore in boats at one time in one place, and Bougainville could collect enough men to hold it in check while he called in reinforcements at least as fast on the French side as the British could on theirs. Another thing was that the wooded country favoured the French defence and hindered the British attack. Lastly, if Wolfe and Saunders collected the whole five thousand soldiers and a still larger squadron and convoy up the river, Montcalm would see the men and ships being moved from their positions in front of his Beauport entrenchments, and would hurry to the threatened shore between Cap Rouge and Pointe-aux-Trembles almost as soon as the British, and certainly in time to reinforce Bougainville and repulse Wolfe.

The 9th was Wolfe's last Sunday. It was a cheerless, rainy day; and he almost confessed himself beaten for good, as he sat writing his last official letter to one of Pitt's friends, the Earl of Holderness. He dated it, 'On board the *Sutherland* at anchor off Cap Rouge, September 9, 1759.' He ended it with gloomy

news: 'I am so far recovered as to be able to do business, but my constitution is entirely ruined, without the consolation of having done any considerable service to the state, or without any prospect of it.'

The very next day, however, he saw his chance. He stood at Etchemin, on the south shore, two miles above Quebec, and looked long and earnestly through his telescope at the Foulon road, a mile and a half away, running up to the Plains of Abraham from the Anse au Foulon, which has ever since been called Wolfe's Cove. Then he looked at the Plains themselves, especially at a spot only one mile from Quebec, where the flat and open ground formed a perfect field of battle for his well-drilled regulars. He knew the Foulon road must be fairly good, because it was the French line of communication between the Anse au Foulon and the Beauport camp. The Cove and the nearest point of the camp were only two miles and a quarter apart, as the crow flies. But between them rose the tableland of the Plains, 300 feet above the river. Thus they were screened from each other, and a surprise at the Cove might not be found out too soon at the camp.

Now, Wolfe knew that the French expected

to be attacked either above Cap Rouge (up towards Pointe-aux-Trembles) or below Quebec (down in their Beauport entrenchments). He also knew that his own army thought the attack would be made above Cap Rouge. Thus the French were still very anxious about the six miles at Beauport, while both sides were keenly watching each other all over the thirteen miles above Cap Rouge. Nobody seemed to be thinking about the nine miles between Cap Rouge and Quebec, and least of all about the part nearest Quebec.

Yes, one man was thinking about it, and he never stopped thinking about it till he died. That man was Montcalm. On the 5th, when Wolfe began moving up-stream, Montcalm had sent a whole battalion to the Plains. But on the 7th, when the British generals were all at Pointe-aux-Trembles, Vaudreuil, always ready to spite Montcalm, ordered this battalion back to camp, saying, 'The British haven't got wings; they can't fly up to the Plains!' Wolfe, of course, saw that the battalion had been taken away; and he soon found out why. Vaudreuil was a great talker and could never keep a secret. Wolfe knew perfectly well that Vaudreuil and Bigot were constantly spoiling whatever Montcalm was doing, so he

counted on this trouble in the French camp as he did on other facts and chances.

He now gave up all idea of his old plans against Beauport, as well as the new plan of the brigadiers, and decided on another plan of his own. It was new in one way, because he had never seen a chance of carrying it out before. But it was old in another way, because he had written to his uncle from Louisbourg on May 19, and spoken of getting up the heights four or five miles above Quebec if he could do so by surprise. Again, even so early in the siege as July 18 he had been chafing at what he called the 'coldness' of the fleet about pushing up beyond Quebec. The entry in his private diary for that day is: 'The *Sutherland* and *Squirrell*, two transports, and two armed sloops passed the narrow passage between Quebec and Levy *without losing a man.*' Next day, his entry is more scathing still: 'Reconnoitred the country immediately above Quebec and found that *if we had ventured the stroke that was first intended we should infallibly have succeeded.*' This shows how long he had kept the plan waiting for the chance. But it does not prove that he had missed any earlier chances through the 'coldness' of the fleet. For it is significant that he afterwards struck

out '*infallibly*' and substituted '*probably*'; while it must be remembered that the *Sutherland* and her consorts formed only a very small flotilla, that they passed Quebec in the middle of a very dark night, that the St Lawrence above the town was intricate and little known, that the loss of several men-of-war might have been fatal, that the enemy's attention had not become distracted in July to anything like the same bewildering extent as it had in September, and that the intervening course of events—however disappointing in itself—certainly helped to make his plan suit the occasion far better late than soon. Moreover, in a note to Saunders in August, he had spoken about a 'desperate' plan which he could not trust his brigadiers to carry out, and which he was then too sick to carry out himself.

Now that he was 'patched up' enough for a few days, and that the chance seemed to be within his grasp, he made up his mind to strike at once. He knew that the little French post above the Anse au Foulon was commanded by one of Bigot's blackguards, Vergor, whose Canadian militiamen were as slack as their commander. He knew that the Samos battery, a little farther from Quebec,

had too small a garrison, with only five guns and no means of firing them on the landward side; so that any of his men, once up the heights, could rush it from the rear. He knew the French had only a few weak posts the whole way down from Cap Rouge, and that these posts often let convoys of provision boats pass quietly at night into the Anse au Foulon. He knew that some of Montcalm's best regulars had gone to Montreal with Lévis, the excellent French second-in-command, to strengthen the defence against Amherst's slow advance from Lake Champlain. He knew that Montcalm still had a total of 10,000 men between Montmorency and Quebec, as against his own attacking force of 5000; yet he also knew that the odds of two to one were reversed in his favour so far as European regulars were concerned; for Montcalm could not now bring 3000 French regulars into immediate action at any one spot. Finally, he knew that all the French were only half-fed, and that those with Bougainville were getting worn out by having to march across country, in a fruitless effort to keep pace with the ships of Holmes's squadron and convoy, which floated up and down with the tide.

Wolfe's plan was to keep the French alarmed

more than ever at the two extreme ends of their line—Beauport below Quebec and Pointe-aux-Trembles above—and then to strike home at their undefended centre, by a surprise landing at the Anse au Foulon. Once landed, well before daylight, he could rush Vergor's post and the Samos battery, march across the Plains, and form his line of battle a mile from Quebec before Montcalm could come up in force from Beauport. Probably he could also defeat him before Bougainville could march down from some point well above Cap Rouge.

There were chances to reckon with in this plan. But so there are in all plans; and to say Wolfe took Quebec by mere luck is utter nonsense. He was one of the deepest thinkers on war who ever lived, especially on the British kind of war, by land and sea together; and he had had the preparation of a lifetime to help him in using a fleet and army that worked together like the two arms of one body. He simply made a plan which took proper account of all the facts and all the chances. Fools make lucky hits, now and then, by the merest chance. But no one except a genius can make and carry out a plan like Wolfe's, which meant at least a hundred hits running, all in the selfsame spot.

No sooner had Wolfe made his admirable plan that Monday morning, September 10, than he set all the principal officers to work out the different parts of it. But he kept the whole a secret. Nobody except himself knew more than one part, and how that one part was to be worked in at the proper time and place. Even the fact that the Anse au Foulon was to be the landing-place was kept secret till the last moment from everybody except Admiral Holmes, who made all the arrangements, and Captain Chads, the naval officer who was to lead the first boats down. The great plot thickened fast. The siege that had been an affair of weeks, and the brigadiers' plan that had been an affair of days, both gave way to a plan in which every hour was made to tell. Wolfe's seventy hours of consummate manœuvres, by land and water, over a front of thirty miles, were followed by a battle in which the fighting of only a few minutes settled the fate of Canada for centuries.

During the whole of those momentous three days—Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, September 10, 11, and 12, 1759—Wolfe, Saunders, and Holmes kept the French in constant alarm about the thirteen miles *above* Cap Rouge and the six miles *below* Quebec; but

gave no sign by which any immediate danger could be suspected along the nine miles *between* Cap Rouge and Quebec.

Saunders stayed below Quebec. On the 12th he never gave the French a minute's rest all day and night. He sent Cook and others close in towards Beauport to lay buoys, as if to mark out a landing-place for another attack like the one on July 31. It is a singular coincidence that while Cook, the great British circumnavigator of the globe, was trying to get Wolfe into Quebec, Bougainville, the great French circumnavigator, was trying to keep him out. Towards evening Saunders formed up his boats and filled them with marines, whose own red coats, seen at a distance, made them look like soldiers. He moved his fleet in at high tide and fired furiously at the entrenchments. All night long his boatloads of men rowed up and down and kept the French on the alert. This feint against Beauport was much helped by the men of Wolfe's third brigade, who remained at the island of Orleans and the Point of Levy till after dark, by a whole battalion of marines guarding the Levis batteries, and by these batteries themselves, which, meanwhile, were bombarding Quebec—again like the 31st of July. The bombard-

ment was kept up all night and became most intense just before dawn, when Wolfe was landing two miles above.

At the other end of the French line, above Cap Rouge, Holmes had kept threatening Bougainville more and more towards Pointe-aux-Trembles, twenty miles above the Foulon. Wolfe's soldiers had kept landing on the south shore day after day; then drifting up with the tide on board the transports past Pointe-aux-Trembles; then drifting down towards Cap Rouge; and then coming back the next day to do the same thing over again. This had been going on, more or less, even before Wolfe had made his plan, and it proved very useful to him. He knew that Bougainville's men were getting quite worn out by scrambling across country, day after day, to keep up with Holmes's restless squadron and transports. He also knew that men who threw themselves down, tired out, late at night could not be collected from different places, all over their thirteen-mile beat, and brought down in the morning, fit to fight on a battlefield eight miles from the nearest of them and twenty-one from the farthest.

Montcalm was greatly troubled. He saw redcoats with Saunders opposite Beauport,

redcoats at the island, redcoats at the Point of Levy, and redcoats guarding the Levis batteries. He had no means of finding out at once that the redcoats with Saunders and at the batteries were marines, and that the redcoats who really did belong to Wolfe were under orders to march off after dark that very night and join the other two brigades which were coming down the river from the squadron above Cap Rouge. He had no boats that could get through the perfect screen of the British fleet. But all that the skill of mortal man could do against these odds he did on that fatal eve of battle, as he had done for three years past, with foes in front and false friends behind. He ordered the battalion which he had sent to the Plains on the 5th, and which Vaudreuil had brought back on the 7th, 'now to go and camp at the Foulon'; that is, at the top of the road coming up from Wolfe's landing-place at the Anse au Foulon. But Vaudreuil immediately gave a counter-order and said: 'We 'll see about that to-morrow.' Vaudreuil's 'to-morrow' never came.

That afternoon of the 12th, while Montcalm and Vaudreuil were at cross-purposes near the mouth of the St Charles, Wolfe was only four miles away, on the other side of the

Plains, in a boat on the St Lawrence, where he was taking his last look at what he then called the Foulon and what the world now calls Wolfe's Cove. His boat was just turning to drift up in midstream, off Sillery Point, which is only half a mile above the Foulon. He wanted to examine the Cove well through his telescope at dead low tide, as he intended to land his army there at the next low tide. Close beside him sat young Robison, who was not an officer in either the Army or Navy, but who had come out to Canada as tutor to an admiral's son, and who had been found so good at maps that he was employed with Wolfe's engineers in making surveys and sketches of the ground about Quebec. Shutting up his telescope, Wolfe sat silent a while. Then, as afterwards recorded by Robison, he turned towards his officers and repeated several stanzas of Gray's *Elegy*. 'Gentlemen,' he said as he ended, 'I would sooner have written that poem than beat the French to-morrow.' He did not know then that his own fame would far surpass the poet's, and that he should win it in the very way described in one of the lines he had just been quoting—

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

At half-past eight in the evening he was sitting in his cabin on board Holmes's flagship, the *Sutherland*, above Cap Rouge, with 'Jacky Jervis'—the future Earl St Vincent, but now the youngest captain in the fleet, only twenty-four. Wolfe and Jervis had both been at the same school at Greenwich, Swinden's, though at different times, and they were great friends. Wolfe had made up a sealed parcel of his notebook, his will, and the portrait of Katherine Lowther, and he now handed it over to Jervis for safe keeping.

But he had no chance of talking about old times at home, for just then a letter from the three brigadiers was handed in. It asked him if he would not give them 'distinct orders' about 'the place or places we are to attack.' He wrote back to the senior, Monckton, telling him what he had arranged for the first and second brigades, and then, separately, to Townshend about the third, which was not with Holmes but on the south shore. After dark the men from the island and the Point of Levy had marched up to join this brigade at Etchemin, the very place where Wolfe had made his plan on the 10th, as he stood and looked at the Foulon opposite.

His last general orders to his army had been

read out some hours before; but, of course, the Foulon was not mentioned. These orders show that he well understood the great issues he was fighting for, and what men he had to count upon. Here are only three sentences; but how much they mean! 'The enemy's force is now divided. A vigorous blow struck by the army at this juncture may determine the fate of Canada. The officers and men will remember what their country expects of them.' The watchword was 'Coventry,' which, being probably suggested by the saying, 'Sent to Coventry,' that is, condemned to silence, was as apt a word for this expectant night as 'Gibraltar,' the symbol of strength, was for the one on which Quebec surrendered.

Just before dark Holmes sent every vessel he could spare to make a show of force opposite Pointe-aux-Trembles, in order to hold Bougainville there overnight. But after dark the main body of Holmes's squadron and all the boats and small transports came together opposite Cap Rouge. Just before ten a single lantern appeared in the *Sutherland's* main topmast shrouds. On seeing this, Chads formed up the boats between the ships and the south shore, the side away from the French. In three hours every man was in his place. Not a sound was

to be heard except the murmur of the strong ebb-tide setting down towards Quebec and a gentle south-west breeze blowing in the same direction. 'All ready, sir!' and Wolfe took his own place in the first boat with his friend Captain Delaune, the leader of the twenty-four men of the 'Forlorn Hope,' who were to be the first to scale the cliff. Then a second lantern appeared above the first; and the whole brigade of boats began to move off in succession. They had about eight miles to go. But the current ran the distance in two hours. As they advanced they could see the flashes from the Levis batteries growing brighter and more frequent; for both the land gunners there and the seamen gunners with Saunders farther down were increasing their fire as the hour for Wolfe's landing drew near.

A couple of miles above the Foulon the *Hunter* was anchored in midstream. As arranged, Chads left the south shore and steered straight for her. To his surprise he saw her crew training their guns on him. But they held their fire. Then Wolfe came alongside and found that she had two French deserters on board who had mistaken his boats for the French provision convoy that was expected to creep down the north shore

that very night and land at the Foulon. He had already planned to pass his boats off as this convoy; for he knew that the farthest up of Holmes's men-of-war had stopped it above Pointe-aux-Trembles. But he was glad to know that the French posts below Cap Rouge had not yet heard of the stoppage.

From the *Hunter* his boat led the way to Sillery Point, half a mile above the Foulon. 'Halt! Who comes there!' — a French sentry's voice rang out in the silence of the night. 'France!' answered young Fraser, who had been taken into Wolfe's boat because he spoke French like a native. 'What's your regiment?' asked the sentry. 'The Queen's,' answered Fraser, who knew that this was the one supplying the escort for the provision boats the British had held up. 'But why don't you speak out?' asked the sentry again. 'Hush!' said Fraser, 'the British will hear us if you make a noise.' And there, sure enough, was the *Hunter*, drifting down, as arranged, not far outside the column of boats. Then the sentry let them all pass; and, in ten minutes more, exactly at four o'clock, the leading boat grounded in the Anse au Foulon and Wolfe jumped ashore.

He at once took the 'Forlorn Hope' and 200

light infantry to the side of the Cove towards Quebec, saying as he went, 'I don't know if we shall all get up, but we must make the attempt.' Then, while these men were scrambling up, he went back to the middle of the Cove, where Howe had already formed the remaining 500 light infantry. Captain Macdonald, a very active climber, passed the 'Forlorn Hope' and was the first man to reach the top and feel his way through the trees to the left, towards Vergor's tents. Presently he almost ran into the sleepy French-Canadian sentry, who heard only a voice speaking perfect French and telling him it was all right—nothing but the reinforcements from the Beauport camp; for Wolfe knew that Montcalm had been trying to get a French regular officer to replace Vergor, who was as good a thief as Bigot and as bad a soldier as Vaudreuil. While this little parley was going on the 'Forlorn Hope' came up; when Macdonald promptly hit the sentry between the eyes with the hilt of his claymore and knocked him flat. The light infantry pressed on close behind. The dumbfounded French colonial troops coming out of their tents found themselves face to face with a whole woodful of fixed bayonets. They fired a few shots. The British charged with a loud

cheer. The Canadians scurried away through the trees. And Vergor ran for dear life in his nightshirt.

The ringing cheer with which Delaune charged home told Wolfe at the foot of the road that the actual top was clear. Then Howe went up; and in fifteen minutes all the light infantry had joined their comrades above. Another battalion followed quickly, and Wolfe himself followed them. By this time it was five o'clock and quite light. The boats that had landed the first brigade had already rowed through the gaps between the small transports which were landing the second brigade, and had reached the south shore, a mile and a half away, where the third brigade was waiting for them.

Meanwhile the suddenly roused gunners of the Samos battery were firing wildly at the British vessels. But the men-of-war fired back with better aim, and Howe's light infantry, coming up at a run from behind, dashed in among the astonished gunners with the bayonet, cleared them all out, and spiked every gun. Howe left three companies there to hold the battery against Bougainville later in the day, and returned with the other seven to Wolfe. It was now six o'clock. The

third brigade had landed, the whole of the ground at the top was clear; and Wolfe set off with 1000 men to see what Montcalm was doing.

Quebec stands on the eastern end of a sort of promontory, or narrow tableland, between the St Lawrence and the valley of the St Charles. This tableland is less than a mile wide and narrows still more as it approaches Quebec. Its top is tilted over towards the St Charles and Beauport, the cliffs being only 100 feet high there, instead of 300, as they are beside the St Lawrence; so Wolfe, as he turned in towards Quebec, after marching straight across the tableland, could look out over the French camp. Everything seemed quiet; so he made his left secure and sent for his main body to follow him at once. It was now seven. In another hour his line of battle was formed, his reserves had taken post in his rear, and a brigade of seamen from Saunders's fleet were landing guns, stores, blankets, tents, entrenching tools, and whatever else he would need for besieging the city after defeating Montcalm. The 3000 sailors on the beach were anything but pleased with the tame work of waiting there while the soldiers were fighting up above. One of their officers, in a letter

home, said they could hardly stand still, and were perpetually swearing because they were not allowed to get into the heat of action.

The whole of the complicated manœuvres, in face of an active enemy, for three days and three nights, by land and water, over a front of thirty miles, had now been crowned by complete success. The army of 5000 men had been put ashore at the right time and in the right way; and it was now ready to fight one of the great immortal battles of the world.

'The thin red line.' The phrase was invented long after Wolfe's day. But Wolfe invented the fact. The six battalions which formed his front, that thirteenth morning of September 1759, were drawn up in the first two-deep line that ever stood on any field of battle in the world since war began. And it was Wolfe alone who made this 'thin red line,' as surely as it was Wolfe alone who made the plan that conquered Canada.

Meanwhile Montcalm had not been idle; though he was perplexed to the last, because one of the stupid rules in the French camp was that all news was to be told first to Vaudreuil, who, as governor-general, could pass it on or not, and interfere with the army as much as he liked. When it was light enough to see

Saunders's fleet, the island of Orleans, and the Point of Levy, Montcalm at once noticed that Wolfe's men had gone. He galloped down to the bridge of boats, where he found that Vaudreuil had already heard of Wolfe's landing. At first the French thought the firing round the Foulon was caused by an exchange of shots between the Samos battery and some British men-of-war that were trying to stop the French provision boats from getting in there. But Vergor's fugitives and the French patrols near Quebec soon told the real story. And then, just before seven, Montcalm himself caught sight of Wolfe's first redcoats marching in along the Ste Foy road. Well might he exclaim, after all he had done and Vaudreuil had undone: 'There they are, where they have no right to be!'

He at once sent orders, all along his six miles of entrenchments, to bring up every French regular and all the rest except 2000 militia. But Vaudreuil again interfered; and Montcalm got only the French and Canadian regulars, 2500, and the same number of Canadian militia with a few Indians. The French and British totals, actually present on the field of battle, were, therefore, almost exactly equal, 5000 each. Vaudreuil also for-

got to order out the field guns, the horses for which the vile and corrupt Bigot had been using for himself. At nine Montcalm had formed up his French and colonial regulars between Quebec and the crest of rising ground across the Plains beyond which lay Wolfe. Riding forward till he could see the redcoats, he noticed how thin their line was on its left and in its centre, and that its right, near the St Lawrence, had apparently not formed at all. But his eye deceived him about the British right, as the men were lying down there, out of sight, behind a swell of ground. He galloped back and asked if any one had further news. Several officers declared they had heard that Wolfe was entrenching, but that his right brigade had not yet had time to march on to the field. There was no possible way of finding out anything else at once. The chance seemed favourable. Montcalm knew he had to fight or starve, as he was completely cut off by land and water, except for one bad, swampy road in the valley of the St Charles; and he ordered his line to advance.

At half-past nine the French reached the crest and halted. The two armies were now in full view of each other on the Plains and only a quarter of a mile apart. The French

line of battle had eight small battalions, about 2500 men, formed six deep. The colonial regulars, in three battalions, were on the flanks. The five battalions of French regulars were in the centre. Montcalm, wearing a green and gold uniform, with the brilliant cross of St Louis over his cuirass, and mounted on a splendid black charger, rode the whole length of his line, to see if all were ready to attack. The French regulars—half-fed, sorely harassed, interfered with by Vaudreuil—were still the victors of Ticonderoga, against the British odds of four to one. Perhaps they might snatch one last desperate victory from the fortunes of war? Certainly all would follow wherever they were led by their beloved Montcalm, the greatest Frenchman of the whole New World. He said a few stirring words to each of his well-known regiments as he rode by; and when he laughingly asked the best of all, the Royal Roussillon, if they were not tired enough to take a little rest before the battle, they shouted back that they were never too tired to fight—'Forward, forward!' And their steady blue ranks, and those of the four white regiments beside them, with bayonets fixed and colours flying, did indeed look fit and ready for the fray.

Wolfe also had gone along his line of battle, the first of all two-deep thin red lines, to make sure that every officer understood the order that there was to be no firing until the French came close up, to within only forty paces. As soon as he saw Montcalm's line on the crest he had moved his own a hundred paces forward, according to previous arrangement; so that the two enemies were now only a long musket-shot apart. The Canadians and Indians were pressing round the British flanks, under cover of the bushes, and firing hard. But they were easily held in check by the light infantry on the left rear of the line and by the 35th on the right rear. The few French and British skirmishers in the centre now ran back to their own lines; and before ten the field was quite clear between the two opposing fronts.

Wolfe had been wounded twice when going along his line; first in the wrist and then in the groin. Yet he stood up so straight and looked so cool that when he came back to take post on the right the men there did not know he had been hit at all. His spirit already soared in triumph over the weakness of the flesh. Here he was, a sick and doubly wounded man; but a soldier, a hero, and a conqueror,

with the key to half a continent almost within his eager grasp.

At a signal from Montcalm in the centre the French line advanced about a hundred yards in perfect formation. Then the Canadian regulars suddenly began firing without orders, and threw themselves flat on the ground to reload. By the time they had got up the French regulars had halted some distance in front of them, fired a volley, and begun advancing again. This was too much for the Canadians. Though they were regulars they were not used to fighting in the open, not trained for it, and not armed for it with bayonets. In a couple of minutes they had all slunk off to the flanks and joined the Indians and militia, who were attacking the British from under cover.

This left the French regulars face to face with Wolfe's front: five French battalions against the British six. These two fronts were now to decide the fate of Canada between them. The French still came bravely on; but their six-deep line was much shorter than the British two-deep line, and they saw that both their flanks were about to be over-lapped by fire and steel. They inclined outwards to save themselves from this fatal overlap on

both right and left. But that made just as fatal a gap in their centre. Their whole line wavered, halted oftener to fire, and fired more wildly at each halt.

In the meantime Wolfe's front stood firm as a rock and silent as the grave, one long, straight, living wall of red, with the double line of deadly keen bayonets glittering above it. Nothing stirred along its whole length, except the Union Jacks, waving defiance at the fleurs-de-lis, and those patient men who fell before a fire to which they could not yet reply. Bayonet after bayonet would suddenly flash out of line and fall forward, as the stricken redcoat, standing there with shouldered arms, quivered and sank to the ground.

Captain York had brought up a single gun in time for the battle, the sailors having dragged it up the cliff and run it the whole way across the Plains. He had been handling it most gallantly during the French advance, firing showers of grape-shot into their ranks from a position right out in the open in front of Wolfe's line. But now that the French were closing he had to retire. The sailors then picked up the drag-ropes and romped in with this most effective six-pounder at full speed, as

if they were having the greatest fun of their lives.

Wolfe was standing next to the Louisbourg Grenadiers, who, this time, were determined not to begin before they were told. He was to give their colonel the signal to fire the first volley; which then was itself to be the signal for a volley from each of the other five battalions, one after another, all down the line. Every musket was loaded with two bullets, and the moment a battalion had fired it was to advance twenty paces, loading as it went, and then fire a 'general,' that is, each man for himself, as hard as he could, till the bugles sounded the charge.

Wolfe now watched every step the French line made. Nearer and nearer it came. A hundred paces! — seventy-five! — fifty! — forty! !—*Fire!!!* Crash! came the volley from the grenadiers. Five volleys more rang out in quick succession, all so perfectly delivered that they sounded more like six great guns than six battalions with hundreds of muskets in each. Under cover of the smoke Wolfe's men advanced their twenty paces and halted to fire the 'general.' The dense, six-deep lines of Frenchmen reeled, staggered, and seemed to melt away under this awful

deluge of lead. In five minutes their right was shaken out of all formation. All that remained of it turned and fled, a wild, mad mob of panic-stricken fugitives. The centre followed at once. But the Royal Roussillon stood fast a little longer; and when it also turned it had only three unwounded officers left, and they were trying to rally it.

Montcalm, who had led the centre and had been wounded in the advance, galloped over to the Royal Roussillon as it was making this last stand. But even he could not stem the rush that followed and that carried him along with it. Over the crest and down to the valley of the St Charles his army fled, the Canadians and Indians scurrying away through the bushes as hard as they could run. While making one more effort to rally enough men to cover the retreat he was struck again, this time by a dozen grape-shot from York's gun. He reeled in the saddle. But two of his grenadiers caught him and held him up while he rode into Quebec. As he passed through St Louis Gate a terrified woman called out, 'Oh! look at the marquis, he 's killed, he 's killed!' But Montcalm, by a supreme effort, sat up straight for a moment and said: 'It is nothing at all, my kind friend; you must not be so

much alarmed!' and, saying this, passed on to die, a hero to the very last.

In the thick of the short, fierce fire-fight the bagpipes began to skirl, the Highlanders dashed down their muskets, drew their claymores, and gave a yell that might have been heard across the river. In a moment every British bugle was sounding the 'Charge' and the whole red, living wall was rushing forward with a roaring cheer.

But it charged without Wolfe. He had been mortally wounded just after giving the signal for those famous volleys. Two officers sprang to his side. 'Hold me up!' he implored them, 'don't let my gallant fellows see me fall!' With the help of a couple of men he was carried back to the far side of a little knoll and seated on a grenadier's folded coat, while the grenadier who had taken it off ran over to a spring to get some water. Wolfe knew at once that he was dying. But he did not yet know how the battle had gone. His head had sunk on his breast, and his eyes were already glazing, when an officer on the knoll called out, 'They run! They run! 'Egad, they give way everywhere!' Rousing himself, as if from sleep, Wolfe asked, 'Who run?'—'The French, sir!'—'Then I die

content ! '—and, almost as he said it, he breathed his last.

He was not buried on the field he won, nor even in the country that he conquered. All that was mortal of him—his poor, sick, wounded body—was borne back across the sea, and carried in mourning triumph through his native land. And there, in the family vault at Greenwich, near the school he had left for his first war, half his short life ago, he was laid to rest on November 20—at the very time when his own great victory before Quebec was being confirmed by Hawke's magnificently daring attack on the French fleet amid all the dangers of that wild night in Quiberon Bay.

Canada has none of his mortality. But could she have anything more sacred than the spot from which his soaring spirit took its flight into immortal fame ? And could this sacred spot be marked by any words more winged than these :

HERE DIED
WOLFE
VICTORIOUS

CHAPTER VIII

EPILOGUE—THE LAST STAND

WOLFE'S victory on the Plains of Abraham proved decisive in the end; but it was not the last of the great struggle for the Key of Canada.

After Wolfe had died on the field of battle, and Monckton had been disabled by his wounds, Townshend took command, received the surrender of Quebec on the 18th, and waited till the French field army had retired towards Montreal. Then he sailed home with Saunders, leaving Murray to hold what Wolfe had won. Saunders left Lord Colville in charge of a strong squadron, with orders to wait at Halifax till the spring.

Both French and British spent a terrible winter. The French had better shelter in Montreal than the British had among the ruins of Quebec; and, being more accustomed to the rigours of the climate, they would have suffered less from cold in any case. But their lot was, on the whole, the harder of the two;

THE DEATH OF WOLFE

After the painting by Benjamin West

for food was particularly bad and scarce in Montreal, where even horseflesh was thought a luxury. Both armies were ravaged by disease to a most alarming extent. Of the eight thousand men with whom Murray began that deadly winter not one-half were able to bear arms in the spring; and not one-half of those who did bear arms then were really fit for duty.

Montcalm's successor, Lévis, now made a skilful, bold, and gallant attempt to retake Quebec before navigation opened. Calling the whole remaining strength of New France to his aid, he took his army down in April, mostly by way of the St Lawrence. The weather was stormy. The banks of the river were lined with rotting ice. The roads were almost impassable. Yet, after a journey of less than ten days, the whole French army appeared before Quebec. Murray was at once confronted by a dire dilemma. The landward defences had never been strong; and he had not been able to do more than patch them up. If he remained behind them Lévis would close in, batter them down, and probably carry them by assault against a sickly garrison depressed by being kept within the walls. If, on the other hand, he marched out, he would have

to meet more than double numbers at the least; for some men would have to be left to cover a retreat; and he knew the French grand total was nearly thrice his own. But he chose this bolder course; and at the chill dawn of April 28, he paraded his little attacking force of a bare three thousand men on the freezing snow and mud of the Esplanade and then marched out.

The two armies met at Ste Foy, a mile and a half beyond the walls; and a desperate battle ensued. The French had twice as many men in action, but only half of these were regulars; the others had no bayonets; and there was no effective artillery to keep down the fire of Murray's commanding guns. The terrific fight went on for hours, while victory inclined neither to one side nor the other. It was a far more stubborn and much bloodier contest than Wolfe's of the year before. At last a British battalion was fairly caught in flank by overwhelming numbers and driven across the front of Murray's guns, whose protecting fire it thus completely masked at a most critical time. Murray thereupon ordered up his last reserve. But even so he could no longer stand his ground. Slowly and sullenly his exhausted men fell back before the French,

who put the very last ounce of their own failing strength into a charge that took the guns. Then the beaten British staggered in behind their walls, while the victorious French stood fast, worn out by the hardships of their march and fought to a standstill in the battle.

Lévis rallied his army for one more effort and pressed the siege to the uttermost of his power. Murray had lost a thousand men and could now muster less than three thousand. Each side prepared to fight the other to the death. But both knew that the result would depend on the fleets. There had been no news from Europe since navigation closed; and hopes ran high among the besiegers that perhaps some friendly men-of-war might still be first; when of course Quebec would have to surrender at discretion, and Canada would certainly be saved for France if the half-expected peace would only follow soon.

Day after day all eyes, both French and British, looked seaward from the heights and walls; though fleets had never yet been known to come up the St Lawrence so early in the season. At last, on May 9, the tops of a man-of-war were sighted just beyond the Point of Levy. Either she or Quebec, or both, might have false colours flying. So

neither besiegers nor besieged knew to which side she belonged. Nor did she know herself whether Quebec was French or British. Slowly she rounded into the harbour, her crew at quarters, her decks all cleared for action. She saluted with twenty-one guns and swung out her captain's barge. Then, for the first time, every one watching knew what she was; for the barge was heading straight in towards the town, and redcoats and bluejackets could see each other plainly. In a moment every British soldier who could stand had climbed the nearest wall and was cheering her to the echo; while the gunners showed their delight by loading and firing as fast as possible and making all the noise they could.

But one ship was not enough to turn the scale; and Lévis redoubled his efforts. On the night of the 15th French hopes suddenly flared up all through the camp when the word flew round that three strange men-of-war just reported down off Beauport were the vanguard of a great French fleet. But daylight showed them to be British, and British bent on immediate and vigorous attack. Two of these frigates made straight for the French flotilla, which fled in wild confusion, covered by the undaunted Vauquelin in the *Atalante*, which fought a

LORD AMHERST

From the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds

gallant rearguard action all the twenty miles to Pointe-aux-Trembles, where she was driven ashore and forced to strike her colours, after another, and still more desperate, resistance of over two hours. That night Lévis raised the siege in despair and retired on Montreal. Next morning Lord Colville arrived with the main body of the fleet, having made the earliest ascent of the St Lawrence ever known to naval history, before that time or since.

Then came the final scene of all this moving drama. Step by step overpowering British forces closed in on the doomed and dwindling army of New France. They closed in from east and west and south, each one of their converging columns more than a match for all that was left of the French. Whichever way he looked, Lévis could see no loophole of escape. There was nothing but certain defeat in front and on both flanks, and starvation in the rear. So when the advancing British met, all together, at the island of Montreal, he and his faithful regulars laid down their arms without dishonour, in the fully justifiable belief that no further use of them could possibly retrieve the great lost cause of France in Canada.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

WOLFE is one of the great heroes in countless books of modern British history, by far the greatest hero in the many books about the fight for Canada, and the single hero of four biographies. It was more than a century after his triumphant death before the first of these appeared: *The Life of Major-General James Wolfe* by Robert Wright. A second Life of Wolfe appeared a generation later, this time in the form of a small volume by A. G. Bradley in the 'English Men of Action' series. The third and fourth biographies were both published in 1909, the year which marked the third jubilee of the Battle of the Plains. One of them, Edward Salmon's *General Wolfe,* devotes more than the usual perfunctory attention to the important influence of sea-power; but it is a sketch rather than a complete biography, and it is by no means free from error. The other is *The Life and Letters of James Wolfe* by Beckles Willson.

The histories written with the best knowledge of Wolfe's career in Canada are: the contemporary *Journal of the Campaigns in North America* by Captain John Knox, Parkman's *Montcalm and Wolfe,* and *The Siege of Quebec and the Battle of*

the Plains of Abraham by A. G. Doughty and G. W. Parmelee. Knox's two very scarce quarto volumes have been edited by A. G. Doughty for the Champlain Society for republication in 1914. Parkman's work is always excellent. But he wrote before seeing some of the evidence so admirably revealed in Dr Doughty's six volumes, and, like the rest, he failed to understand the real value of the fleet.

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